GREEK & ROMAN HISTORIOGRAPHY IN LATE ANTIQUITY

Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.

EDITED BY

Gabriele Marasco

BRILL

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PREFACE

The wide growth of studies on Late Antiquity during the last few decades has made more important the analysis of the historiographical sources of that period, which are often not well known. There has been a lot of interest in such sources, as is shown by the great number of studies about single authors and historiographical genres, and, particularly during the last few years, about the writings of ecclesiastical historians. But, although there exist some useful inventories[1] and analyses dedicated to particular themes in the development of historiography during Late Antiquity,[2] there is no general study of these historians' writings—including both pagans and Christians—, of their relationships, polemics and similarities. Besides the religious polemic since Eusebius, well focused by A. Momigliano in an important essay,[3] Late Antiquity has been characterized also by consonances of themes and methods between pagan and Christian historians, who often used and appreciated the writings of colleagues of other faiths. Ecclesiastical historians in particular are important sources, often not yet well known or used, on the political and social history of the Late Empire. It is important to analyze their characteristics with respect to the pagan and Christian historiographical traditions.

The purpose of this book is to analyze the historiographical development during Late Antiquity, to give to scholars an instrument for consultation and to make better known some at present little known historians. We particularly want to show the relationships between them and their position in the culture and politics of their age.

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[1] Cf., with reference to sources concerning Oriental regions, G. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* I (Berlin, 1958²); J. Karayannopulos and G. Weiss, *Quellenkunde zur Geschichte von Byzanz (324–1453)*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden, 1982); concerning the literary sources more generally of that period, cf. A. Demandt, *Die Spätantike* (München, 1989), 7–33.

[2] Cf. particularly B. Croke and A.M. Emmett (eds.), *History and Historians in Late Antiquity* (Sydney, 1983).

[3] "Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century A.D.," in A. Momigliano (ed.), *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1963), 79–99.

The editors at Brill—Albert Hoffstädt, Job Lisman and, at a later stage, Marcella Mulder and Michiel Klein Swormink—have been particularly helpful: I would like to thank them very much.

Gabriele Marasco

ABBREVIATIONS

ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, hrsg. v. H. Temporini und W. Haase, Berlin-New York, 1972–.
BHAC	*Bonner-Historia-Augusta-Colloquium*, Bonn, 1963–1991.
FCH	R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire*, 3 vols., Liverpool 1981–1983.
FHG	C. and T. Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, 5 vols., Paris 1841–1847.
CCL	Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina.
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium.
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte.
HE	*Historia ecclesiastica.*
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores Antiquissimi.
PG	Patrologia Graeca.
PL	Patrologia Latina.
PLRE	A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, I–III, Cambridge 1971.
PO	Patrologia Orientalis.
RE	*Paulys Realencyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft.*
SCh	Sources chrétiennes.

PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE AGE OF CONSTANTINE[1]

Friedhelm Winkelmann

The rule of Constantine the Great provoked a number of contemporary historical works. Yet the impulses were not as intensive as we might expect from an age of transition, from an epoch of such deep changes in religious politics as the Constantinian age. In particular, when we consider the brisk and continuous Greek historiography in preceding times of which Evagrius (*HE* 5, 24) and Hieronymus (*Praefatio in Danielem*), for instance, give an overview.

The historiography in the age of Constantine offers a great number of fundamental problems which have caused intense and controversial research-work. Thus, in a short chapter it is only possible to mention the most important of the problems and to give a list of the most significant attempts to solve them. Of course, many of them need further thorough investigation in order to find a solution. To begin with, we will introduce some of the main problems of how the historical works of this epoch have been handed down to us, of dating, of authorship, and of the sources of these writings.

1. *Basic Approach*

1.1. *Eusebius of Caesarea*

Eusebius was born circa 260/265 in Caesarea/Palestine and died 338/339 in Caesarea, where he had been bishop since circa 313/315. He was a highly productive and inventive Christian writer. There is a series of works handed down to us on different theological themes labelled Exegetica, Dogmatica, Apologetica and Historica.

He became famous especially for his two historical works, that is the *Chronicle* and the *Church History* (*Historia Ecclesiastica* = *HE*). Both these works he had started already before the Great Persecution of

[1] I am much obliged to Dr. Thomas Pratsch for help with the English translation.

the Christians inaugurated by Diocletian and thus before the beginning of Constantine's reign. He began his historical research with the *Chronicle*. To this work he referred both in *HE* (1, 1, 6) and in his *Generalis elementaria introductio* (1, 1). From these testimonies we can conclude that the *Chronicle* is older than *HE*.[2] It was after 25 July 325/6, that is after Constantine's *vicennalia*, that Eusebius published a second extended edition of the work.

Eusebius aimed at more chronological exactness than either of his Christian predecessors Iulius Africanus and Hippolytus who were following chiliastical principles. Thus, in the first part of the *Chronicle* Eusebius checked the correctness of the chronological systems of different nations. On the basis of these critically examined materials he made up a *Chronicle-canon*, that is a chronological list of events arranged in several rubrics.

Unfortunately, the original Greek text of this important work is almost completely lost, but it is preserved in translations.[3] In an Armenian translation the most important parts of the second edition have survived.[4] Joseph Karst dated that translation at the end of the 6th or at the beginning of the 7th century. Two Syrian translations have preserved the *Chronicle* in an abridged form. One of them originated from circa A.D. 600, the other, surviving in Dionysius of Tell-Mahre's *Chronicle*, from circa A.D. 775.[5] Much more ancient is the Latin translation by Jerome.[6] Yet he only translated the *Chronicle-canon*. He distinguished three stages of treating the Eusebian original. Up till the destruction of Troja he translated without any alteration. From this event to A.D. 325/326 he has added information from other historical works. The rest, reaching up to A.D. 378, is Jerome's own work.[7] Fragments and quotations from the

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[2] Cf. T.D. Barnes, *GRBS* 21 (1980), 192f.

[3] For a thorough investigation of the tradition and the sources of this Eusebian work, see A.A. Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius and Greek Chronographic Tradition* (Lewisburg/London, 1979), esp. 29–83 and 128–168.

[4] *Eusebius Werke* V. *Die Chronik des Eusebius aus dem armenischen übersetzt*, ed. J. Karst (Leipzig, 1911), GCS 20.

[5] *Chronica minora*, ed. E.W. Brooks and I.B. Chabot (Paris, 1904), CSCO 3, 77–105; I.B. Chabot, *Incerti auctoris Chronicon Pseudo-Dionysianum uulgo dictum* (Leuven, 1927), CSCO 91, 3–159; (Leuven, 1949) CSCO 121; P. Keseling, "Die Chronik des Eusebius in der syrischen Überlieferung", *Or. Chr.* 23 (1926/7), 23–48, 223–241; 24 (1927), 33–56.

[6] *Eusebius Werke* VII. *Die Chronik des Hieronymus*, ed. R. Helm, GCS 47 (Berlin, 1956^2).

[7] Helm, *op. cit.*, 6sq. 250. Cf. G. Brugnoli, *Curiosissimus excerptor. Gli "Additamenta" di Girolamo ai "Chronica" di Eusebio* (Pisa, 1995).

Greek Eusebian text, to be found in later Byzantine histories, are helpful for a critical examination of the quality of these translations.[8]

Rudolf Helm made use of these different materials in his excellent edition of the Eusebian work. He attempted to reconstruct the original as far as possible. He marked the additions by Jerome, and he verified the later Greek testimonies.[9] In his view the schedules presented by the Latin church father are closer to the original than the form offered by the Armenian translator and it is not recommendable to rely upon the chronological fixation of the Armenian text.[10]

Unlike his *Chronicle*, Eusebius' *Church History* has survived in the Greek original form. It has been edited in a masterly fashion by Eduard Schwartz.[11] The Latin, Syriac, Armenian, and Coptic versions help only slightly to reconstitute the Eusebian text, but they are an important contribution to the history of civilisation.[12]

In this chapter we only have room to call special attention to the following two important problems which occupy modern research work. Firstly, there is the problem of dating the different degrees of the rise of *HE*. Secondly, there is the question of the principles and the reliability of Eusebius' handling of his sources.

Eduard Schwartz concluded from the tradition of the text that there were four editions of *HE* by Eusebius:[13] the manuscript group BDM, plus the Syriac and the Latin translation, can be traced back to the final edition of the work, while the manuscript group ATER, also representing the final edition, gives witness to parts of former Eusebian editions and revisions of the work. This result found favourable reception by many scholars, in contrast to his datings of the single revisions of the work by Eusebius. In the view held by Schwartz, the first edition of *HE* was composed of eight volumes plus the writing on the *Martyrs of Palestine*, and it was published in

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[8] *Eusebii Chronicorum libri duo*, 1, ed. A. Schöne (Berlin, 1866); Helm, *op. cit.*

[9] Cf. Helm, XXVIf.

[10] Helm XXVIII, XLVf.

[11] *Eusebius Werke* IX 1–3. *Die Kirchengeschichte*, ed. E. Schwartz (Leipzig, 1998^{2}); Editio minor (Berlin, 1952^{5}). On the development of that edition cf. F. Winkelmann, "Geleitwort zum Nachdruck der Edition", *Eusebius Werke* IX 1 (Berlin, 1998^{2}).

[12] For the editions of these versiones, see M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, 2 (Turnhout, 1974), 272sq. no. 3495.

[13] The corresponding passages of the text were thoroughly discussed by Schwartz, GCS IX 3, pp. XLVII–LIX and by H. Emonds, "Zweite Auflage im Altertum", *Klassisch-Philologische Studien* 14 (Leipzig, 1941), 25–44.

the time between the first days of A.D. 312 and Maximinus' overthrow in the summer of A.D. 313. But Eusebius had begun to prepare this work already prior to the outbreak of the Great Persecution of the Christians by Diocletian.[14] The second edition (plus volumes 9 and 10, 5–7) was dated by Schwartz to A.D. 315, for in his view the first war between Constantine and Licinius ended in that year. A third edition in ten volumes (above all plus 10, 4) was dated by him to circa A.D. 317, because he supposed that Diocletian died on 3rd December 316. A final edition including the damnation of Licinius was published by Eusebius in A.D. 323 after the definitive victory of Constantine over Licinius. In each of these editions Eusebius adapted his work to the changes in the political state of affairs. Thus, Schwartz concluded his analysis of the Eusebian *HE* with the well known words that the work in the original form was a majestic monument to the free church, but it became by several annexes and changes after a decennium a hymn to an autocrat and his dynasty, of which no pagan panegyrist would have been ashamed a generation before.[15]

The findings of Schwartz were criticized and thoroughly discussed by Richard Laqueur.[16] He dated the first edition of *HE* earlier than proposed by Schwartz to a time when the persecution inaugurated by Diocletian had not yet taken place and supposed an edition in seven volumes.[17] On the whole Laqueur supposed five stages in the composition of the *HE*. His dating of the first and that of the last edition after the death of Licinius has found general acceptance down to our days. Much more problematical is the dating of the remaining revisions of the work.

Timothy D. Barnes, accepting the dating of the first edition by Laqueur, has demonstrated in a convincing manner that the first edition was published in seven volumes. Later on Eusebius altered the text of these seven volumes only by some virtually insignificant changes, "such as (1) the reference to contemporary persecution in the preface (1.1.2); (2) the references to Pamphilus' and Eusebius'

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[14] Schwartz, *op. cit.*, LVI.

[15] Schwartz, *op. cit.*, LIX.

[16] R. Laqueur, *Eusebius als Historiker seiner Zeit* (Berlin, 1929). He concentrated on the investigation of the sources and revisions of Eus. *HE* volumes VII–IX.

[17] In the view of A. Harnack the first edition already contained seven volumes, see Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*, II 2 (Leipzig, 1958^{2}), 113f.

Defence of Origen composed in 308–310 (6.23.4, 33.4, 36.4) and to Eusebius' *Life of Pamphilus* (6.32.3); (3) the allusion to Porphyry's *Against the Christians* (6.19.2sqq.)", "also 1.2.27; 1.9.3sq.; 1.11.9; 7.18sq., index and chapter-heading 7.30.22; 7.32.1sqq."[18]

A new basis for dating the remaining revisions of the work is provided by an alteration in the dating of the *bellum Cibalense*, i.e. the first war between Constantine and Licinius, to A.D. 316/317; and of the death of Diocletian not later than 313.[19] Barnes supposes that a second edition was published after Maximinus' persecution in circa A.D. 313/314, comprising the first edition in a revised form plus some parts of volume eight plus a short recension of the *Martyrs of Palestine* and volume nine of *HE*. Soon after, in circa A.D. 315, there appeared a third edition in ten volumes, including the documents contained in volume 10.5–7 but without the *Martyrs of Palestine*. Thus, Barnes suggests four editions altogether.

Vincent Twomey, examining the position of Laqueur, again supposes like Laqueur five editions of the work. He agrees with Laqueur in dating the first edition before the Great Persecution. Yet, differing from Laqueur, he dates the second edition after the edict of Galerius, with volume eight as reconstructed by Laqueur and with a revision of volumes 1–7, the third edition after the end of the persecution by Maximianus with volume eight in the present form. The fourth edition after A.D. 317 plus volume nine and 10.4, and the final edition in ten volumes in A.D. 325/6.[20]

Repeatedly, we had already to refer to the Eusebian *Martyrs of Palestine*. A long recension of that writing is handed down to us in a Syriac comprehensive translation, the oldest manuscript of which dates back to A.D. 411, but containing only some fragments of the original Greek text.[21] A short Greek recension is closely related to

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[18] T.D. Barnes, "The Editions of Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History", *GRBS* 21 (1980), 191–201 (quot. 201).

[19] Cf. P. Bruun, "The Constantinian Coinage of Arelate", *Finska Fornminneesföreningens Tidskrift* 52, 2 (Helsinki, 1953), 17–21; id., "Studies in Constantinian Chronology", *Numismatic Notes and Monographs* 146 (New York, 1961), 10–22; Ch. Habicht, "Zur Geschichte des Kaisers Konstantin", *Hermes* 86 (1958), 360–378; T.D. Barnes, *JRS* 63 (1973), 32–35. Yet M.R. Alföldy, "Die Niederemmeler 'Kaiserfibel'. Zum Datum des ersten Krieges zwischen Konstantin und Licinius", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 176 (1976) 183–200, dates the *bellum Cibalense* to A.D. 314.

[20] V. Twomey, *Apostolikos Thronos* (Münster, 1982). On pp. 192–200 he discusses some interpolations in the original text of Volume 1.

[21] For the modern editions of this work, see *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, no. 3490.

the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. In two of the main manuscripts of the Ecclesiastical History (Codd. *Paris. gr.* 1430 [A] and *Mosq. gr.* 50 [R]) it is preserved between volumes eight and nine, in others as an appendix to the *Historia* (Codd. *Laur.* 70, 7 and 70, 20 [T and E]), but all four manuscripts record in the heading of the *Martyrs* that the work belongs in volume eight (GCS 9. 2, p. 907). From this and from further arguments Barnes concludes "that at some stage Eusebius intended the passages which now constitute the beginning and the end of Volume Eight of the Ecclesiastical History".[22] And his arguments for the dating of the long recension of that work in a first edition between May and November 311 and in a revision in 313 or later seem to be convincing, too.[23]

"A new chapter of historiography begins." By these words Arnaldo Momigliano appropriately characterized the importance of Eusebius' documentation in his historical writings, "because he wrote it with a documentation which is utterly different from that of the pagan historians".[24] For a large part of the material and information to be found in his historical and apologetical works, Eusebius' writings are our only source. Eusebius made use of the rich material put down in archives and libraries which were destroyed not long after his death: the library in Caesarea in Palestine, established by the famous Origen and continued by Pamphilus and Pamphilus' scholar Eusebius; the archive in Jerusalem which was founded by a scholar of Origen; moreover the library in Tyre. Additionally, he has referred to the archive in Edessa (*HE* 1.13.5). He suffered from deficiencies in the archives (*HE* 7.12.1; 24.1; 36.2). He gathered Origen's letters (*HE* 6.36.3).[25] Several times he showed clearly that he could use only single documents, chosen from a much larger quantity known to him (*HE* 6.33.3; 7.29.2). Finally, he made a note whenever he was lacking in sufficient documents to clarify a particular issue. Besides this, we ought to call special attention to the large catalogues of ancient

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[22] Barnes, *GRBS* 21, 193–196 (quot. 196).

[23] For the results of older scholarship, see Emonds, *op. cit.*, 41–45.

[24] A. Momigliano, *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1963), 92. For older literature on these problems, see Schwartz, GCS 9, 3, pp. CLIII–CLXXXVII; Laqueur, *Eusebius* 106–115, 163–179, 201–209; W. Völker, "Von welchen Tendenzen liess sich Eusebius bei Abfassung seiner 'Kirchengeschichte' leiten?" *Vig. Christ.* 4 (1950), 157–180.

[25] Cf. C. Andresen, "Siegreiche Kirche im Aufstieg des Christentums", *ANRW* II 23 (1979), 391ff.

writers and writings listed in *HE*, and to Eusebius' collection of material on the history of the biblical canon.[26] Thus Eusebius was confronted with a mass of documents, lists of bishops of the great and famous episcopal sees in the Roman Empire, writings and letters of various origins. Warmington even advocated the thesis that Eusebius had received a series of documents by acquaintance with some official from the court of Constantine.[27] Of course, he was particularly familiar with the situation in the Orient and consequently knew Greek sources from Greece, Syria, Palestine, Asia Minor and Egypt, but he was less familiar with sources in Latin.

A much discussed problem is Eusebius' method of handling his sources on which he based his work. There are some depreciatory opinions on Eusebius' methods in recent times,[28] depending to some extent on the condemnation of Eusebius' credibility as a whole. Followers of the verdict of Jacob Burckhardt will more easily incline to a position condemning the historical methods of Eusebius. It was B. Gustafsson who examined with convincing results the main principles of critical use, selection and incorporation of source materials by Eusebius.[29] Eusebius' main principles of selection and quotation of sources were essentially his view of orthodoxy, his criterion of apostolic tradition and his evaluation of the age of the sources. Within these aims he was handling his sources in a reliable manner. Mistakes, confusions or utilization of forged documents by mistake are rare. But sometimes he truncated his sources, having in mind his main apologetical purposes such as for instance the unity of the church or the good use by future Christian generations.[30]

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[26] Cf. Völker, *art. cit.* 176–179.

[27] B.H. Warmington, "The Sources of Some Constantinian Documents in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History and Life of Constantine", *Studia Patristica* 18, 1 (1989), 93–98.

[28] For a survey of modern theses, see M. Gödecke, *Geschichte als Mythos. Eusebs 'Kirchengeschichte'* (Frankfurt a. M./Bern, 1987), 32–53; and on results of older scholarship see H.J. Lawlor/J.E.L. Oulton, *Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea. The Ecclesiastical History*, 2 (London, 1928), 19–46.

[29] B. Gustafsson, "Eusebius' principles on handling his sources, as found in his Church History, Volumes I–VII", *Studia Patristica* IV 2 (Berlin, 1961), 429–441. Cf. too D. Timpe, "Was ist Kirchengeschichte?", in W. Dahlheim (ed.), *Festschrift R. Werner* (Konstanz, 1989), 171–204, especially 186–194; C. Dupont, "Décisions et textes constantiniens dans les oeuvres d'Eusèbe de Césarée", *Viator* 2 (1971), 1–32. As an example of a negative view, see R.M. Grant, "The Case against Eusebius or, Did the Father of Church History write History?", *Studia Patristica* 12 (Berlin, 1975), 413–421.

[30] Cf. T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass./London, 1981), 141.

Eusebius' writing *De vita Constantini* (= *VC*) has also been thoroughly examined in recent times: in particular the question of its authenticity and the reliability of the documents and letters quoted in it have been discussed. The discussion on the value of *VC*'s documents was inaugurated by Amadeo Crivellucci.[31] Yet, since the Papyrus Londiniensis 878 has been discovered, the documents quoted in *VC* are generally accepted as genuine, because this papyrus, written shortly after A.D. 320, is an official copy of an imperial document, which we know from *VC* 2.27–29.[32]

Henri Grégoire first of all contested even the Eusebian authorship of the whole work.[33] His attack at least led to a thorough examination of many aspects of this panegyrical biography.[34] The modern view is that *VC* is an authentic writing of Eusebius but was left unfinished by him and published only after his death. Some inconsistencies of this work can be explained by the short time of its composition.

1.2. *Lactantius*

Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius, later on called "Christian Cicero", was born in North Africa. Diocletian appointed him to the position of a rhetor at his court in Nicomedia. There he converted to the Christian belief. After the Great Persecution Constantine made him an instructor of his eldest son Crispus at his court in Trier.

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[31] A. Crivellucci, *Della fede storica di Eusebio nella Vita di Costantino* (Livorno, 1888). For the debate on the authenticity of VC, see F. Winkelmann, "Zur Geschichte des Authentizitätsproblems der Vita Constantini", *Klio* 40 (1962), 197–205 = id., *Studien zu Konstantin dem Großen und zur byzantinischen Kirchengeschichte* (Birmingham, 1993), no. I.

[32] For the authenticity of the documents, see particularly A.H.M. Jones/T.C. Skeat, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 5 (1954), 196–200; K. Aland, *Studia Patristica*, 1 (Berlin, 1957), 563–565; H. Dörries, *Das Selbstzeugnis Kaiser Konstantins* (Göttingen, 1954); H. Kraft, *Kaiser Konstantins religiöse Entwicklung* (Tübingen, 1955), 160–201; C. Pietri, "Constantin en 324. Propagande et théologie impériales d'après les documents de la vita Constantini", in E. Frézouls (ed.), *Crise et redressement dans les provinces européenes de l'Empire* (Strasbourg, 1983), 63–90. For further titles see notes 26 and 28 above.

[33] The modern discussion on the authenticity of that Eusebian writing was aroused by Grégoire's essay "Eusèbe n'est pas l'auteur de la 'Vita Constantini' dans sa forme actuelle et Constantin ne s'est pas 'converti' en 312", *Byzantion* 13 (1938), 561–583.

[34] Cf. Winkelmann, *Klio* 40, 213–243. One of the latest attacks against its authenticity was led by Michele R. Cataudella, "La 'persecuzione' di Licinio e l'autenticità della 'Vita Constantini'", *Athenaeum* NS 48 (1970), 46–83; 229–250.

Lactantius especially wrote Christian systematic works interpreting the Christian dogma.

Only as a badly damaged manuscript from 11th century now in Paris (Cod. *Paris. lat.* 2627) has a work with the title *De mortibus persecutorum* (= *DMP*) come down to us as a scripture of a certain Lucius Cecilius. Thus, Jean Rougé says that neither the manuscript nor the text of *DMP* has given insight so far into all their secrets.[35] Not until 1901 was it that René Pichon deduced that the author of this work must be Lactantius. The majority of recent scholars accept Pichon's view of the identity of *DMP* with the title *De persecutione* which Jerome has listed in his *Libri de viris inlustribus* (cap. 80) among the writings of Lactantius.[36]

No agreement has yet been reached on the dating, the place where it was composed, or the sources of *DMP*. Jacques Moreau took it as a fact that this work was composed in the years 318/321.[37] But some evidence proves the autumn A.D. 313 to be the *terminus post quem* of the elaboration of *DMP*. *This* was soon after the end of the Great Persecution (*DMP* 1.4). The latest chronologically relevant events mentioned in *DMP* can be dated to the end of A.D. 313, the beginning of A.D. 314 at the latest: that is Diocletian's death (*DMP* 42), the death of Maximinus Daia (*DMP* 49), and the execution of Valeria (*DMP* 51.39–41).[38] The fact that there is no reference in *DMP* to the *bellum Cibalense*, the first war between Constantine and Licinius, points to the summer of A.D. 316 as *terminus ad quem*.

The dating of *DMP* between A.D. 313/314 and the summer of A.D. 316 has some consequences regarding the place where it was

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[35] For the problems of the MS see J. Rougé, "A propos du manuscrit du De mortibus persecutorum", in J. Fontaine/M. Perrin (ed.), *Lactance et son temps* (Paris, 1978), 13–22 (quot. 22); id., "Remarques sur le premier folio du manuscrit du De mortibus persecutorum", *REAug.* 30 (1984), 30–35; J.L. Creed, *De mortibus persecutorum* (Oxford, 1984), XLV–XLVII.

[36] Cf. R. Pichon, *Lactance* (Paris, 1901), 337–445; S. Brandt, *Berliner Philologische Wochenschrift* 23 (1903), 1257. For the history of the debate, see J. Moreau, SCh 39, 1 (Paris, 1954), 22–33; Creed, *De mortibus*, XXIX–XXXIII. For sceptical views, see P. Nautin, *RHE* 50 (1955), 895; I. Opelt, *JbAC* 16 (1973), 98; J. Rougé, *op. cit.*, 22 n. 28.

[37] Moreau, SCh 39,1, 34–37.

[38] Cf. A.S. Christensen, *Lactantius the Historian* (Kopenhagen, 1980), 21–23; T.D. Barnes, *JRS* 63 (1973), 31; J. Molthagen, *Gnomon* 53 (1981), 713. Already M. Gelzer referring to H. Lietzmann (*RE* 12/1, 355), was in favour of a time of production between June 313 and October 314 (*Kleine Schriften* 2 [Wiesbaden, 1963] 379).

composed. As mentioned previously, in A.D. 314/315 Constantine appointed Lactantius to the position of Crispus' teacher at the imperial court in Trier. Hence it follows that Lactantius had already begun to compose *DMP* when he stayed in Nicomedia in Bithynia. Thus, his work cannot be understood as done by order of the Constantinian court or even of the emperor in person. This thesis is supported by the fact that *DMP*'s account about the emperors Maximianus, Maxentius, and Licinius differs substantially from that given by the Constantinian official propaganda on these colleagues of Constantine. In particular, Licinius is described by Lactantius as a forthright and honest sort of person. This has been thoroughly demonstrated by Barnes and Christensen.[39] A further indication of an eastern origin of this writing is the fact that the author shows exact knowledge on the developments in the eastern parts of the Empire.[40] On the other hand, it can be taken as a fact that *DMP* was not completely finished in the east, but that Lactantius continued to work at *DMP* during his stay at Trier, for he was well informed on some important Constantinian dates. For instance, among all historians of his time he alone dated the Constantinian change in religious politics already to A.D. 306 (*DMP* 24.9) and described Maxentius as an enemy of Christianity.

Particularly Jacques Moreau put the thesis forward that Constantinian propaganda had an important influence on Lactantius.[41] Yet T.D. Barnes, analysing the problem of Constantinian prapaganda in the work, reaches a different result: "Lactantius' treatment of Maximian and Maxentius discountenances the idea that he was closely following changes in official attitudes." Thus *DMP* "proves that the author was not simply purveying the contemporary official version of events accepted at the court of Constantine".[42] Heck, on the other hand, argues that we have to consider reports of contemporaries and materials from the Constantinian office as a source of the occidental events.[43] But Christensen, calling attention to the fact that Licinius

[39] Cf. Barnes, *JRS* 63, 41ff. (Maximianus and Maxentius); Christensen, *op. cit.*, 27–41 (Licinius).

[40] For instance Licinius in Nicomedia (*DMP* 48.1.13), or the death of Galerius (*DMP* 35.4). Cf. for further examples Christensen, *op. cit.*, 25.84 and E. Heck, *Die dualistischen Zusätze und die Kaiseranreden bei Lactantius* (Heidelberg, 1972), 214f.

[41] Moreau, SCh 39, 1, 35ff. 44–51.

[42] Barnes, *JRS* 63 (1973), 41–43 (quotations 41, 43).

[43] Heck, *op. cit.*, 159 n. 7.

too is positively represented by Lactantius, supposes: "The entire work . . . becomes the personal view of the period held by the private individual Lactantius, marked by his sympathies and dislikes and not by those of the emperor Constantine".[44] It seems that the problem whether the work is influenced in any way by the emperor personally cannot yet be solved satisfactorily.

There is the question whether Lactantius made use of a written source on the history of the western parts of the Empire. It was the theory of Alexander Enmann, that a lost latin *Kaisergeschichte* existed, written in biographical form by an unknown biographer.[45] This theory was accepted by almost all scholars. Enmann wished to explain some parallels between Aurelius Victor and Eutropius. So he supposed that this lost work reached to the time of Diocletian and was therefore written near the end of the third century. Silomon argued that Lactantius had used two sources (the lost *Kaisergeschichte* on the one hand and a lost history of Constantine on the other hand). In his view the work was written in the time of Julian.[46] Finally, Roller attempted to identify the *Kaisergeschichte* as a source of *DMP* 17–50. And he dated the *Kaisergeschichte* after 313. All these theories are rejected by Moreau and definitively by Barnes. It is the merit of Barnes to have proved that the *Kaisergeschichte* did not end before the death of Constantine and therefore was composed soon after 337, probably not later than 340.[47] Thus, this hypothetical work could not have served as a source of *DMP*.[48] Nevertheless, the thesis of Silomon and Roller was revived again in a modified form by Christensen. In his view, the account up to 312 is based on the lost *Kaisergeschichte*. But

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[44] Christensen, *op. cit.*, 81. Heck answers: "kommt man nicht ganz ohne . . . Constantin selber als Quelle für Angaben in den Mortes aus" (p. 214 with view on *DMP* 24.9).

[45] A. Enmann, "Eine verlorene Geschichte der römischen Kaiser und das Buch De viris illustribus urbis Romae", *Philologus* Suppl. 4 (1884), 337–501 (published in 1883). For the history of this problem cf. T.D. Barnes, "The Lost Kaisergeschichte and the Latin Historical Tradition", *BHAC* 1968/9 (1970), 14ff. and *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft* VIII 5 (München, 1989), 196–198.

[46] H. Silomon, "Laktanz de mortibus persecutorum", *Hermes* 47 (1912), 250–275; H. Silomon, "Untersuchungen zur Quellengeschichte der Kaiser Aurelian bis Constantius", *Hermes* 49 (1914), 538–580; K. Roller, *Die Kaisergeschichte in Lactanz, De mortibus*, phil. Diss. (Gießen, 1927), especially 25–38.

[47] Moreau, *op. cit.*, 37–44; Barnes, *BHAC* 1970, 13–43.

[48] M. Gelzer already wrote: "Mit Hohl (Gnomon 5, 107) halte ich die Fragestellung nach einem von Lactanz benutzten heidnischen Geschichtswerks für abwegig" (*Kleine Schriften* 2 [Wiesbaden, 1963] 379).

doubts remain whether the analysis of these chapters as well as the comparison with Aurelius Victor by Christensen are convincing enough.[49] Thus, the results obtained by Moreau and Barnes seem the most reasonable solution to the problem.

1.3. *Praxagoras*

We owe the knowledge of a Constantinian history in two volumes only to Photius' remarks in cod. 62 of his *Bibliotheca*. It is written by an otherwise unknown author. As Photius noted, this author was named Praxagoras, came from Athens and wrote this history at an age of 22 years.[50] Photius reported, too, that he was a pagan and that he had already written an account in two volumes on the history of the Athenian kings at the age of 19 and, moreover, was the author of a historical work in six volumes on the Macedonian king Alexander written at the age of 31. Photius praised Paxagoras' style in his Constantinian biography, written in the Ionic dialect.

Praxagoras' account on Constantine ended when the emperor achieved sole rule over the whole Roman Empire. This fact is explicitly accentuated by Photius. Thus, W. Enßlin's remark that Photios has only handed down to us a fragment from the beginnings of Constantine I does not hold true.[51] Enßlin based his view on the supposition that Praxagoras made use of a lost historical source which was written between A.D. 313 and 340.[52]

The last event of which Praxagoras has given an account is the foundation of Constantinople by Constantine. On that event he wrote like a contemporary. So it seems to be likely that Praxagoras composed his work shortly after that event. Jacoby even supposed that the author had written his account on the occasion of the celebration of the foundation of the town and that he had handed over the biography to the emperor in person.[53] An argument for that dating of Praxagoras' biography of Constantine could be the assumption that Photius took the remark on Praxagoras' history of Alexander

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[49] Christensen, *op. cit.*, 49–64, 72–81.

[50] *Photius, Bibliothèque*, 1, ed. R. Henry (Paris, 1959), 61–63; F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, II B (Berlin, 1929), 948f. No. 219 (text), II D (Berlin, 1930), 632 (commentary).

[51] Enßlin, *RE* 22 (1954), 1743.

[52] W. Seston, *Diocletien et la Tétrarchie* (Paris, 1946), 21 n. 1.

[53] Jacoby, *op. cit.*, 632.

the Great from the preface to the history of Constantine. In this case the biography of Constantine would be the last writing of Praxagoras. But why then should the biography have found an end already in A.D. 324?

In comparison, the thesis that Photius' remark on Praxagoras' History of Alexander the Great was based on a note which was written on the margin of his copy of the History of Constantine, proposed already by Ulrich von Wilamowitz, seems to be preferable. And Jacoby even implied that Photius could have used a complete edition of Praxagoras' works or perhaps the Biography of Constantine in a later revision. But that does not seem likely.

Jacques Moreau thoroughly discussed the possibility that both Eutropius and Libanius, too, have used as a source Praxagoras' Biography of Constantine, and that details which are reported by Libanius, but are not noted down by Photius, nevertheless go back to the original work of Praxagoras.[54]

1.4. *Origo Constantini Imperatoris*

Arnaldo Momigliano summarized the results of scholarship on *Origo Constantini* in the words that "All is in doubt about the first part of the Anonymus Valesianus".[55] The work in question is an anonymous, brief Latin account of the reign of Constantine, which only survived in a codex unicus from the 9th century, which is deposited in Berlin (Cod. *Berolin. Phillipps* 1885, fols. 30^{v}–36^{v}).[56] The main problems are the uncertainties about the date and the sources of the *Origo*.

Earlier scholarship dated that writing to the times shortly after the death of Constantine in A.D. 337.[57] In recent research the problem of dating this writing is combined with the complex problem of the author's sources. The beginning of *Origo* already looks like the final sentence of an account on the rule of Diocletian and Maximian.

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[54] J. Moreau, *Historia* 4 (1955), 126f.

[55] Momigliano, *Conflict* 87.

[56] Cf. the editions of J. Moreau/V. Velkov; *Excerpta Valesiana* (Leipzig, 1968^{2}), and of I. König, *Origo Constantini. Anonymus Valesianus* (Trier, 1987), with a German translation and an excellent and voluminous commentary.

[57] For a guide to modern views on the disputed points, see *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft* VIII 5 (München, 1989), 195sq. and for a thorough investigation on the sources of Origo E. Klebs, "Das Valesische Bruchstück zur Geschichte Constantins", *Philologus* 47 (1889), 53–80.

Could the *Origo* consequently be considered only as a part of a much more comprehensive lost *Kaisergeschichte*?

Concerning the attempts of recent scholarship to date the work, one should pay particular attention to the investigations by Barnes and König. T.D. Barnes demonstrated that the *Origo* never drew on the lost *Kaisergeschichte*, and he supposed that the *Origo* could have been composed in A.D. 337 or soon after that:[58]

> Its language and contents are judged to put its composition long before 400. Excepting the interpolations from Orosius and a possible interpolation from Eutropius or Jerome [Barnes refers here to the studies of E. Klebs], may it not be the work of a contemporary? If it was composed in 337 or very soon afterwards, no written sources need be postulated—and its independence of the KG [Kaisergeschichte] is easily explicable.[59]

Ingemar König assumed that some parallels between the *Origo* and Jerome's *Chronicle*, composed in A.D. 380/381, are pointing to a *terminus post quem* of *Origo*. In his view particularly the following three passages *Origo* 6 = Hieron. a. 2323, *Origo* 19 = Hieron. a. 2333, *Origo* 35 = Hieron 2353 support the supposition that the author has copied Jerome rather than Eutropius.[60] This argument is refuted convincingly by T.D. Barnes.[61] In his view "it might, on the contrary, be the case that Jerome had read the Origo and reproduces its wording".[62] Thus, there is no hindrance to dating the *Origo* before A.D. 380. König suggests the time after Orosius composed his *Historia adversus paganos* as *terminus ad quem*—that is the time after A.D. 417. From Orosius' *Historia* 7.28, that is the Orosian account on Constantine, somebody has interpolated some quotations into the text of the *Origo*: *Origo* 20 = Orosius 7.28.18, *Origo* 29 = Orosius 7.28.29 and 7.28.21, *Origo* 33 = Orosius 7.28.1, *Origo* 34 = Orosius 7.28.29, 30, *Origo* 35 = Orosius 7.28.31.[63] Yet it is not possible, in the view of

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[58] Barnes, *BHAC* 1970, 24–27.

[59] Barnes, *BHAC* 1970, 27, 2 and in *Phoenix* 43 (1989), 159 too: its contents leave little doubt that it is independent of all the other surviving literary sources for the Constantinian period.

[60] König, *op. cit.*, 23f.

[61] T.D. Barnes, "Jerome and the Origo Constantini Imperatoris", *Phoenix* 43 (1989), 158–161.

[62] Barnes, 161, n. 13.

[63] For a thorough investigation of the interpolations, see also V. Neri, *Medius princeps* (Bologna, 1992), 210–282.

König, to determine the precise date of that Christian revision of the original form of the *Origo*.[64]

After a thorough analysis of the *Origo* Valerio Neri proposed another date for this work. In his view the main source was composed in the time of the rule of Valentinian I (364–375). This supposed main source was based on two elder sources, that is in the first place the lost *Kaisergeschichte*, assumed by Enmann, and secondly an account about Constantine, written shortly after A.D. 324 and ceasing with the definitive victory of Constantine over Licinius. Thus the *Origo* is, according to Neri, the result of a series of manipulations made perhaps by one hand.[65]

Giuseppe Zecchini dates the pagan version of the *Origo* to A.D. 337/340 and, taking up the thesis of Mazzarino that the *Origo* only is a fragment of the lost *Kaisergeschichte* of Enmann, he describes the *Origo* as a history of occidental, senatorial and pagan origin, which gave an antichristian account of the events of the third century, but remained neutral vis-a-vis Constantine, who was a Christian indeed but a friend of the Roman senate too.[66] He dated the Christian revision of the text to the time of the rule of Flavius Constantius III (417–421). The Christian interpolator relied on Orosius and Lactantius *DMP* (*Origo* 3.8: *DMP* 33.6). According to Zecchini that Christian revision could have been created within the environment of the Roman senate.

Thus, there are questions left, with regard to the date of *Origo*'s editions, sources, and revisions, which have not yet found convincing answers.

Did any further history exist, perhaps, composed in the age of Constantine, which has not come down to us? Libanius in *Oratio* 59. 20 mentioned *logographoi* and *poietai*, which had given an account of the war between Constantine and Maxentius in A.D. 312. Did he, consequently, know some historical sources that are unknown to us? It seems to be more probable that Libanius' remark is referring to the accounts given by Eusebius and Praxagoras.

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[64] König, *op. cit.*, 26.
[65] Neri, *op. cit.*, 282.
[66] G. Zecchini, *Ricerche di storiografia latina tardoantica* (Roma, 1993), 29–38 (quotation 37); S. Mazzarino, *Il pensiero storico classico* (Bari, 1966), ii 2, 226f.

2. *Methods and Tendencies in Historical Interpretation*

2.1. *Eusebius of Caesarea*

Christian chronography has been understood from the very beginning as having a connexion with biblical Salvation History. The first Christian chroniclers known to us, Iulius Africanus and Hippolytus, already attempted to integrate the whole of world history into the ordered system of Christian interpretation of historical development. Eusebius' *Chronicle*, too, did not disagree with that Christian principle. Yet, in contrast to the former, the main aim of his work was to correct his Christian predecessors, that means, he intended to improve their methods and to correct some of their scopes of chronological calculations, their making use of the sources, and their chronological schemes. Eusebius, thus, is not the creator of Christian chronography, but with his name an important new degree of Christian chronographical work is associated. So, Heinrich Gelzer rightly called Iulius Africanus the father of Christian chronography,[67] but beside Africanus, we always have to name Eusebius as a basic Christian chronographer. The most thorough analysis of Eusebius' *Chronicle* is given by Alden Mosshammer.[68]

Eusebius' preface to his *Chronicle* has come down to us via an Armenian and a Latin translation of the work. Some parts are preserved, moreover, in the original Greek language by Eusebius' *Praeparatio evangelica* and by the *Chronicle* of the Byzantine historian Georgius Syncellus.[69] The Eusebian introduction is very important to our interpretation of his work, since Eusebius explains his basic aims and methods. It is true that both translators shortened the original Eusebian text, but, comparing both translations, we are able to recognize the most important parts of Eusebius' intentions. In the first place Eusebius called special attention to the fact that he intended to have an exact chronological method which was guided by the contemporary rules of science and he gave explanations to the achievement of that aim. Eusebius said that he has critically verified all the chronologies of the Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Jews. Unlike his

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[67] H. Gelzer, *Sextus Iulius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie*, 1 (Leipzig, 1898), 1.

[68] A.A. Mosshammer, *The 'Chronicle' of Eusebius and the Greek Chronographic Tradition* (London, 1979), cf. also the analysis by Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* 111–120.

[69] Helm, *Chronik des Hieron.*, 279ff.

predecessors, Iulius Africanus and Hippolytus, Eusebius was not lead by chiliastic purposes. Without naming Africanus and Hippolytus, Eusebius differed unequivocally from them and disagreed with their methods, since in his view there was a clear contrast between chiliastic interpretations of chronology and scientific exactness. In Eusebius's view nobody was able to predict the exact moment of the end of the world by chronological calculations. Apart from this polemical aim Eusebius was aware of the polemical nature of all chronological work. In his *Chronicle* Eusebius showed only little interest in apologetic tendencies, especially, for example, the argument that the biblical culture is the eldest one.[70]

Eusebius listed his sources both in summaries as well as in the headings of quotations from other histories. Mosshammer investigated them thoroughly.[71]

In the first part of his work, the *Chronography*, Eusebius checked the chronologies of the nations. In this context, he gave extensive quotations from his sources with critical interpretations, beginning with the chronography of the Chaldeans, further checking the chronographies of the Assyrians, Medians, Lydians, Persians, Jews, Egyptians, and the Greeks, finishing with a list of the Roman emperors.

From this critically proved material Eusebius selected information for the *Chronicle-canon*, which is the second part of his *Chronicle*. This part was translated by Jerome very accurately. Thus, this translation comes very close to the Greek original. Eusebius started the Canon only with facts which are based on correct calculation. Thus he began neither with the creation of the world by God nor with Adam, but with Abraham. His chronological system was based on the lists of the kings of the nations and on the Greek Olympiades. He combined these dates with the data known from the Old Testament. The chronologies of the nations he arranged in columns side by side.

In that chronological system Eusebius integrated references to historical and cultural facts which he gathered from historical and literary works, and in particular the notes on the events of church history, i.e. after the incarnation of Christ, were of considerable length. Important facts were graphically accentuated. The number

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[70] Cf. J. Laurin, *Orientations maîtresses des apologistes chrétiens de 270 à 361* (Rom, 1964), 106ff.

[71] Mosshammer, *op. cit.*, 128–168.

of the respective decade was underlined. In this way, the readers were enabled to quickly make use of that work.

The second edition of the *Chronicle* ended with Constantine's *vicennalia*, like his *HE*. But, in my view, this is no proof of any ideological intention or so-called political theology.

Eusebius' *Chronicle* had its effect on later chroniclers. The later Byzantine world-chronicle was based on his work, yet, besides this, it was falling back to the chiliastic structure of Africanus' *Chronicle*. The Eusebian work was just too critical and too little ideological. Thus, the later Christian chronicles began anew with the creation of the world by God.[72] In Armenia, Eusebius' *Chronicle* has always been regarded as of great authority. Without the Armenian translation Eusebius' Chronography as the first part of the work would be lost. Already the first edition of the *Chronicle* was translated into the Syrian language circa A.D. 600. The second edition was inserted into the *Chronicle* of Pseudo-Dionysius of Tell-Mahre, which was composed circa A.D. 775.[73]

By means of Hieronymus' translation the Eusebian *Chronicle* became the standard text for world chronology until the Reformation period. This way, Eusebius' work was the one chronography of Late Antiquity that had the most influence on both the chronological method and material in the West. Nevertheless, the later Latin chroniclers started again with the creation of the world by God, like the Byzantine chroniclers. And, besides this, they based their work on unhistorical principles of chronological arrangements. Quintus Iulius Hilarianus for instance, writing A.D. 397, relied on the model of the creation-week (one day of the creation is equal to 1000 years).[74] Sulpicius, composing his *Chronicle* circa A.D. 400, started his work with Adam, and Paulus Orosius (5th century) arranged the history of the world according to the model of four kingdoms, like Daniel, and this way he was of great influence on further occidental historiography. Only Augustine used Jerome's translation as the unique basis for volumes 15–18 of his main opus *De civitate Dei*.

Eusebius became especially famous for his *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

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[72] Cf. H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, 1 (München, 1978), 329, 331f.

[73] For a list of these traditions, see *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, no. 3494.

[74] Quintus Iulius Hilarianus, *De cursu temporum*, ed. C. Frick, *Chronica minora*, 1 (Leipzig, 1892), 153–174.

Therefore, he is called "father of church history", leaning on Cicero's designation of Herodotus as "father of history" (*De legibus* 1.1.5).[75]

In the preface to *HE* Eusebius explicitly expressed that up to his day nobody had attempted to write a history of the church (*HE* 1.1.3–5). He alone had searched everywhere in archives and libraries, now destroyed and lost, for writings, letters, and documents that are important to the development of Christianity in the first three centuries. Thus, his *HE* has been utilized ever since as a mine of lost sources and information, handed down to us only by this Eusebian work. A series of writings from which Eusebius took quotations, and many of the events he mentioned, as well as many persons on whom Eusebius wrote about are documented only by Eusebius' *HE*. In addition to that Eusebius' interpretation of the events and the choice of sources vastly influenced and determined all the later accounts of the ancient church. We are only partly able to control and correct Eusebius' report in an exact manner by writings, documents, letters, and other information handed down to us independently.

Eusebius concentrated in *HE* on giving an account of the development of the church, being particularly interested in the internal affairs of the church. In his view the account of relations with the Roman emperors seemed to be only a supplement, as far as these were of importance for understanding the history of the church. He mentioned the main issues of his account at the beginning of his work (*HE* 1.1.1f.):[76] the most important events of the history of the church; the lists of bishops of the great episcopal sees; the theological writers and preachers; the heretics; the history of the Jews after the death of Jesus Christ; the pagan attacks upon the Christians; the lives and sufferings of the Christian martyrs and confessors. It is a sign of Eusebius' independent critical sense that he recorded the theologians and bishops side by side as a basic theme of church history. All these main topics of the work were important in the time

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[75] Ferdinand Christian Baur first used this surname (*Die Epochen der kirchlichen Geschichtsschreibung* [Basel, 1852] 9).

[76] For the main concern of Eusebius' *HE* and a thorough interpretation of the Eusebian preface, see the study of M. Tetz, "Christenvolk und Abrahamsverheissung. Zum 'kirchengeschichtlichen' Programm des Eusebius von Caesarea", in: *Jenseitsvorstellungen in Antike und Christentum, Gedenkschrift A. Stuiber, JbAC* Ergänzungsband 9 (1982), 30–46. R.M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford, 1980), argues that this preface was produced only for the second edition of *HE*. That seems to be hardly probable.

of Eusebius from theological, political, and apologetic points of view. Thus, Walther Völker formulated the standpoint that Eusebius was mainly moved by the problems of his time, which involuntarily seduced him to paint a picture of the past with the colours of the then present time.[77] Rightly, Hartmut Leppin underlines the omission of the emperors among the main problems listed by Eusebius. Of course, he did not exclude them from his history, but the reigns of the emperors do not form the basic arrangement of the work.[78]

Circumstantial explanations of his theology of the history can only be found in later Eusebian works.[79] But already in the *HE* one can clearly see that he always comprehended all historical development under the auspices of the Christian God as Salvation History (e.g. *HE* 1.2.17–23).[80]

In the first volume, Eusebius demonstrated the divinity of the Logos and the divine character of Christianity. Here, he attempted to confirm the apologetic principle of antiquity. Thus, he listed the predictions of Old Testament prophecy (*HE* 1.2–4) and collected and explained some source material about Jesus' life. He relied on the Gospels and on accounts of pagan historians.[81] Thus, he turned first to a contribution to a critical account of the life of the Saviour (*HE* 1.5–13). In volumes 2 and 3 the Apostolic Age is presented by Eusebius. It is the history of the consolidation of the church and of the end of Jewish significance in Salvation History. The purpose of volumes 4 and 5 is on the one hand the account of the persecution of the church by misguided emperors resulting in glorious martyr-

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[77] W. Völker, *Vig. Christ.* 4 (1950), 157.

[78] H. Leppin, *Von Constantin dem Großen zu Theodosius II.* (Göttingen, 1996), 26.

[79] Cf. J. Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques d'Eusèbe de Césarée durant la période prénicéenne* (Dakar, 1961).

[80] Cf. M. Wacht, *JbAC* 36 (1993), 111: "Die politische Geschichte, hier der Aufstieg Roms zur weltumspannenden Macht, ist also Ergebnis providentieller Fügung, die Ausbreitung des Christentums auch als Telos der profanen Geschichte bestimmt". D. König-Ockenfels already emphasized the Christian theological interpretation of the historical process in the view of Eusebius, "Christliche Deutung der Weltgeschichte bei Euseb von Caesarea", *Saeculum* 27 (1976), 348–365. Salvation History is one of the elementary principles of Eusebius' *HE* in the view of F. Bovon, "L'Histoire Ecclésiastique d'Eusèbe de Césarée et l'histoire du salut", in F. Christ, ed., *Oikonomia, Heilsgeschichte als Thema der Theologie. Festschrift O. Cullmann* (Hamburg-Bergstadt, 1967), 129–139.

[81] For a thorough critical analysis of the contents and the construction of the single volumes of *HE*, see V. Twomey, *Apostolikos Thronos* (Münster, 1982), 20–200; Barnes, *Constantine and Eus.* 128–147. Cf. too G.F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories* (Paris, 1977), 1–166; M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford, 1980).

doms, and on the other, the account of the rise of heresies and the defence of the orthodox church against such dangerous attacks. In volumes 6 and 7 Eusebius focused his attention almost exclusively on two single theologians, i.e. volume 6 on Origen, volume 7 on Dionysius of Alexandria.

The last three volumes deal with the contemporary development of the church. Volume 8 contains the account of an event of incisive import for Christianity, that is the Great Persecution of the Christians by Diocletian and Galerius. In a short introduction to volume 8 Eusebius differentiated the following volumes as an account of contemporary history compared with volumes 1–7 as history of the past. After 40 years of peace the persecution was totally unexpected by Eusebius and the Christians of his time. It had a traumatic effect and was understood by Eusebius as a deep incision.[82] Eusebius described the dreadful end of the persecutors as divine punishment, but he explained this persecution, too, as a punishment from God for the quarrels within the church and among the bishops (see esp. *HE* 8, 1.1, 7). Thus, in his view the persecution was also God's instrument for purifying the church. Volume 9 gives an account of the continuation of the persecution in the eastern parts of the Empire further on after the Edict of Galerius (A.D. 311).

The apostasy of Licinius, the definitive defeat of Licinius by Constantine at Chrysopolis (324), the following *damnatio memoriae* of Licinius (*HE* 10.9.5) and the sole rule of Constantine who was manifestly sympathetic to Christianity—these are the themes of Volume 10.

This short survey shows that from the beginning of the work to the Great persecution the Roman world was turned upside down in the view of the author. Eusebius had to react to such incisive developments by alterations to his account. But the main body of the *HE* was left untouched.

The *HE* ended with A.D. 324 and was never continued by Eusebius. Is there any reason why he finished this work at that date and never continued it? Was he overburdened as a bishop by the theological quarrels which began then? Was he disappointed by Constantine's inconstant religious policy? His expectations were written down in

[82] Dieter Timpe's remarks, "die Kirchengeschichte des Eusebius ist nicht die historiographische Bewältigung von diokletianischer Verfolgung und konstantinischer Wende" (*op. cit.*, 175). In my view this holds true only for the first seven volumes of the work.

HE 10. Or was he vexed about the fact that bishops and theologians argued controversially with one another after the turning-point in the Roman religious policy by Constantine? Continuing the history of the church, he could not remain silent on such unpleasant facts and developments. Truly, it is impossible to find certain answers to such questions.

With the *HE*, created by Eusebius as a new historical *genus*, and with Christian biography there arose new historical models. In part they were rooted in Ancient Greek tradition, but in part they went down new roads. Thus, they clearly differed from the aims, and partially from the methods, of Greek historiography and biography, and they had considerable influence on the manner and shape of all later historiography up to our times.

Again and again scholars tried to look for an answer to the question about the new characteristic of Eusebius' *HE*. He himself distinguished that work from his *Chronicle*. Yet he did not name fundamental distinctions (*HE* 1.1.6). The new work should be more detailed, since the historical notes in the *Chronicle* could only be short. But this is not the only difference between both operas. The *Chronicle* was bound to the chronological system: by comparison, in *HE* the choice of facts and sources, the interpretation of the events and the whole account were led by substantive principles (*HE* 1.1.4, 8).[83]

Eusebius, in any case, consciously differed from the historiography as known up to his days with regard to principles and methods. Thus, he dissented from some of the axioms of ancient historical writing: No political events, accounts of wars, actions or patriotism were in the foreground of Eusebius' *HE*, but conflicts in confessions of faith and struggles for the freedom of the soul (*HE* 5. Prolog 3f.). He accepted the ancient historiographical principle of truth, but he referred it to the Christian God, whom he understood as the sole guarantor of a truly historical report.

The object of church history, according to Eusebius, was the people of God. This people is distributed all over the world and is not bound to a single nation (*HE* 1.4.2ff.; 10.4.19f.). It is no *ethnos* and it is not contained within fixed borders.[84]

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[83] A closer relation between *Chronicle* and *HE* is underlined by Tetz, *op. cit.*, and Timpe, *op. cit.* This thesis was already put forward by F. Overbeck, *Über die Anfänge der Kirchengeschichtsschreibung* (Basel, 1892).

[84] For Eusebius's conception of the Church, see H. Zimmermann, *Ecclesia als Objekt der Historiographie* (Wien, 1969), 16–24; Timpe, *op. cit.*, 184.

Keeping the apostolic tradition of doctrine intact was the most important principle of Eusebius' *HE*. In his view, that was the true task of the apostolic successors, that is, the bishops. A firm and unchangeable body of teaching has to be preserved within historical development. Yet, such a basic factor of the history of the church cannot be a „geschichtliche Größe", to use the words of Heinrich Kraft.[85] Therefore, the leading principle of Eusebius' *HE* is of immovable character. In this respect, the Eusebian account differed in a fundamental way from classical historiography, which took special interest in the historical process and wished to go to the bottom of the events. In contrast to that, Eusebius considered the apostolic doctrine to be unchangeable in time and not prone to development or change. Considering that, we can explain what has occupied the recent discussion on the real definition of Eusebius' *HE*,[86] Eusebius' true historiography; but because of his static basic principle he could only rarely go much beyond chronology and beyond the gathering of material, arranged by main themes and tendencies.

Thus he could not find any historical explanation of the differences in Christian doctrine, that is the heresies. He explained them rather as innovations called forth by the evil demon, who made use of bad persons as instruments. Thus, they were to be blamed.[87]

Eusebius also walked down new pathways not alone by his conception of history but by the method used in the *HE*. He inserted extensive catalogues and summaries of writings into his work. This makes clear the importance of the various theological works in the view of Eusebius. He expressed his expert opinion on questions of authenticity and importance of such writings. Especially valuable are the lists of the works of the Jewish theologian and philosopher Philo of Alexandria (*HE* 2.18.1–8), of the Christian apologist Melito of Sardes (*HE* 4.26.2f.), of Clemens of Alexandria (*HE* 6.13.1), of Hippolytus (*HE* 6.22), and of Origen (*HE* 6.36.2f.). Thus, important information is handed down to us about works that are either lost or only fragmentarily known to us. The later Greek church historians retained this method, inaugurated by Eusebius. In the Occident

[85] H. Kraft, *Eusebs Kirchengeschichte* (München, 1967), 32–35.

[86] For further information on this problem, see Timpe, *op. cit.*, 171–204.

[87] For the investigation of this problem, see C. Mazzucco, "Gli 'Apostoli del diavolo': gli eretici nella 'Storia ecclesiastica' di Eusebio di Cesarea", *Augustinianum* 25 (1985), 749–781.

on the other hand Jerome introduced a particular history of Christian literature which was separated from historiography.

The most conspicuous difference between Eusebius' *HE* and ancient historiography is the lack of orations in *HE*. On the whole he neglected stylistic elegance. A further difference is that in volumes 1–7 Eusebius gave an account only about the past and based it only on research in archives and libraries. Finally, ancient historians, for instance Thucydides, Polybius, Alexander Polyhistor, and Diogenes, only seldom quoted documents. By comparison the historical writings of the Old Testament and of later Jewish historians contain many quotations from other documents and letters. Christian authors took this method as a model. And Eusebius followed them in his historical and apologetic works and even in the panegyrical biography of Constantine. In the view of Jews and Christians the spoken or written word was of immense importance, because of the important role of the *logos*, revealed by Holy Scripture.[88]

Summarizing the most important differences between the *HE* and ancient historiography, one has to call special attention to the *leitthema* of the account which is not subject to the rules of historical development, to the theological or apologetic aims which contradict principles of historiography, to the neglect of stylistic or rhetorical elegance, to the lack of oratorical compositions, to extensive quotation from other documents, writings, and letters, or to the record of events from the past resting upon materials preserved in archives and libraries.

Eusebius influenced the further Christian interpretation of the history of the ancient church especially by the following aspects: firstly, he adopted the idea already expressed by the evangelist Luke in the *Acts of the Apostles* and later on by Hegesippus (Eusebius' *HE* 3.32.7f.), that the Church in the beginning was in unanimous agreement concerning doctrine, feelings, and interests. The variety of Christian beliefs and the variety of Christian factions were, on the contrary, interpreted by Eusebius as the deed of demons, misleading bad persons in order to disturb the original harmony of the Christians. In

[88] Cf. F. Winkelmann, "Probleme der Zitate in den Werken der oströmischen Kirchenhistoriker", in: *Das Korpus der griechischen-christlichen Schriftsteller. Historie, Gegenwart, Zukunft*, ed. J. Irmscher/K. Treu (Berlin, 1977), 195–207 = Winkelmann, *Studien zu Konstantin dem Großen und zur byzantinischen Kirchengeschichte* (Birmingham, 1993), no. XI.

his view, the first heretic was Simon Magus. Thus, the historical development is caused by a mythical factor, that is the struggle of evil against good. Secondly, Eusebius' *HE* is guided by a theology of victory. Under the protection of God the Christians are invincible. Therefore, the martyrs who were steadfast till death and suffered greatly for their Christian belief, were situated to the fore of the Eusebian account. By comparison, Eusebius mentioned the great number of apostates during the persecutions only by the way (for instance *HE* 8.2), though the apostasy was one of the most difficult problems of the ancient church. In the first volumes of the *HE* Eusebius gave emphasis to the episcopal succession as a guarantee of a pure Christian faith. Yet, after the Great Persecution, inaugurated by Diocletian, Eusebius changed his mind. Now the martyrs occupied the first place of his account, because of the failing of most of the bishops during the persecution. Thirdly, Eusebius was especially interested in the parallel development of the kingdom of God and the Roman Empire. The incarnation of Jesus Christ in the age of the emperor Augustus was planned by God in Eusebius' view (*HE* 1.2.18ff.). That fundamental principle of Eusebius' standpoint was disturbed by some emperors who were persecutors of the Christians. This datum he interpreted in two ways: on the one hand he understood the persecutions only as exceptions, inaugurated by bad emperors, who were influenced by evil demons. On the other hand he explained the persecutions as God's punishment for offences within the Christian church, a punishment interpreted as leading to a turn for the better (*HE* 8.13.12f.; 9.8.1ff.). Finally, Eusebius was only slightly interested in the history of occidental Christianity. He turned his attention particularly to the events within the Church of Alexandria and to the development of Origen's theology.

Eusebius did not continue his *HE* beyond A.D. 324. The following development of the churches, especially the quarrels between the bishops and their vanities, was less victorious in his view. Thus it was in his panegyrical speeches (*De Sepulcro Christi* [On the Holy Sepulchre] and *Laus Constantini* [Tricennalian Oration]) and in the *Life of Constantine* (*VC*) that Eusebius did seek to explain the importance of the fully established rule of Constantine over the whole Empire for the development of the church.[89] Thus, from the beginning

[89] For a carefully weighed interpretation of these three panegyrical writings of Eusebius, see A. Cameron, "Eusebius of Caesarea and the Rethinking of History",

of his historical investigations to the end, Eusebius developed his view of the history of Christianity and his opinion about the relations between the Church and the Roman emperors. It is our task to search in a sympathetic manner how his view developed and the way in which it found expression in his works.

Eusebius' historical writings left a most lasting impression on the historiography that followed after the age of Constantine up to our times. Especially his *Church History* has had a very rich manuscript tradition,[90] and there are important successors to name. It influenced not only the historiography of the countries of Greek civilization, but was also translated into Latin, Syriac, Armenian, and the Coptic language.[91] In the Occident it became a standard work on the first three centuries of Christian history in the Rufinian Latin translation. Until the present time Eusebius' interpretation of the most important aspects and events of the development of ancient Christianity has not yet lost its influence. Eusebius' *HE* not merely influenced the tradition of otherwise unknown events and developed new methods, such as the quotation of documents in a historical account, but it was also important for the interpretation of the historical process and of single events. We have already listed the most important items. Dieter Timpe points to a further consequence of Eusebius' historical work that a not to be foreseen effect of his Church history is the relation of philosophical-theological theory and historical-chronological practice. After classical antiquity a philosophy of history has never been devised without Church history or a universal history without Salvation history.[92]

VC in many aspects comes up to the principles of a biography of an emperor, formulated in the age of Hellenism.[93] But when the church historian Socrates (*HE* 1.1.2) and later on Photius (*Bibl.* cod. 127) called special attention only to the encomiastic character of that

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in E. Gabba (ed.), *Tria corda*, *Scritti in onore di A. Momigliano* (Como, 1983), 71–88. Further cf. N.H. Baynes, "Eusebius and the Christian Empire", in id., *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays* (London, 1955), 168–172; H.A. Drake, *In Praise of Constantine* (Berkeley, 1976); S. Calderone; "Eusebio e l'ideologia imperiale", in C. Giuffrida and M. Mazza, eds., *Le trasformazioni della cultura nella tarda antichità* (Neapel, 1985), 11–26; J.R. Fears, "Optimus princeps—Salus generis humanum", in E. Chrysos, ed., *Studien zur Geschichte der römischen Spätantike* (Athen, 1989), 88–105.

[90] Cf. Schwartz, GCS 9.3 (Leipzig, 1909), XVII–CXLVII.

[91] See for the oriental tradition of the work *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, no. 3495.

[92] Timpe, *op. cit.*, 198.

[93] Cf. especially Menander, ed. Spengel, *Rhet. Gr.* 3.368–377.

work, they underlined nothing other than one characteristic of that biography. *VC* is a work of panegyric as well as having biographical and historical aims. Thus *VC* has been thoroughly discussed by modern scholars from different disciplines and from different viewpoints.[94]

Eusebius adopted only such principles of biography not opposed to fundamental Christian rules and belief. He was conscious of the differences with pagan thought (*VC* 1.10.2). Most pagan terms as for instance *tyche*, *andreia* or *phronesis* he replaced by Christian notions.[95] It was a severe break with the classical rules of encomiastic writing that Eusebius inserted documents, letters, and edicts into the second and third volume of *VC*, just as in his historical and apologetic works. Profane events he excluded whenever possible (*VC* 1.11). So he was not obliged to give an account of the difficult times in the life of his hero. Thus, with *VC* Eusebius created a new model of Christian biography.

It was Eusebius' method to avoid facts incompatible with his inclinations, i.e. which opposed his view of the emperor Constantine or his own part in the theological quarrels of that time. And he could presume that the contemporary educated reader or hearer of his work knew what to expect from him. Therefore it is necessary to be cautious with judgements originating from our modern conception of credibility.[96]

Worth noting are also Eusebius' conclusions resulting from his experiences of the theological quarrels of his time: the Constantine of *VC* is superior to bishops, theologians, and synods, since he surpasses them by his theological and political maturity.[97]

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[94] For composition, literary genus and style of *VC*, see R. Farina, *L'impero e l'imperatore cristiano in Eusebio di Cesarea* (Zurich, 1966), 19–23; F. Winkelmann, GCS *Eusebius* I 1, XLIX–LXIV.

[95] For the pagan background and the terms used by Eusebius in *Praep. ev.*, see Chesnut, *op. cit.*, 37–88.

[96] Some examples of this Eusebian method were examined by H.A. Drake, "What Eusebius knew: The Genesis of the Vita Constantini", *Cl. Phil.* 83 (1988), 20–38, and T.D. Elliott, "Eusebian frauds in the Vita Constantini", *Phoenix* 45 (1991), 162–171.

[97] Cf. H.J. Sieben, *Die Konzilsidee der Alten Kirche* (Paderborn/Leiden/Zürich, 1979), 424–465; J. Straub, "Kaiser Konstantin als episkopos ton ektos", *Studia Patristica* 1 (Berlin, 1957), 678–695; id., "Constantine as koinos episkopos. Tradition and Innovation in the Representation of the First Christian Emperor's Majesty", *DOP* 21 (1967), 39–55; K.M. Girardet, "Das christliche Priestertum Konstantins d. Gr. Ein Aspekt der Herrscheridee des Eusebius von Caesarea", *Chiron* 10 (1980), 569–592;

Unusually, Eusebius inserted into this encomiastic biography some aspects of critique and reservation. That was clearly a break with the Hellenistic rules of panegyric writing. In this connection Giorgio Pasquali has referred to two passages.[98] *VC* 4.29ff. gave an account of some edifying speeches which the emperor delivered to the imperial court. But his admonitions, Eusebius said, were without any result. In *VC* 4.3 Eusebius spoke about serious reproaches that had been made of Constantine's way of ruling, but he avoided both further details and his own opinion. In *VC* 4.54.2f. Eusebius listed some results of the imperial *philanthropia*, namely the increasing violence among the inhabitants of the Roman Empire during Constantine's rule and secondly the entry of persons into the Church who were not honourable and candid Christians. In Eusebius' view that was the result of Constantine's goodness. Eusebius expressed further reserve with regard to Constantine's report of his vision of the Cross before the battle at the Milvian bridge (*VC* 1.28). Eusebius emphasized that this account seemed to be incredible and he explicitly referred to the fact that the emperor himself had given that report. Eusebius could not have been pleased with these aspects: firstly, there was the concentration on the Cross as a central *signum* of the Christian faith. In the view of Eusebius the Cross was only one element of Christian faith by the side of others in the earthly life of the *logos*. Secondly, there were the circumstances and content of the vision, influenced by constituent parts of the cult of *Sol invictus*.

It is impossible to decide whether *VC* was written before or after the death of Constantine. Yet, at the beginning and at the end of that work Eusebius expressed his aim to entrust to Constantine's sons and successors the idealized emperor as a model ruler. So he depicted Constantine to them as an emperor raised by God. Thus, this work ought to be interpreted partly as a legacy and partly as an admonition for the coming generation. Besides this we cannot fail to notice that Eusebius also wished to create a literary memorial to the venerated first Christian emperor (cf. for instance *VC* 4.75).

Later Byzantine authors of Christian histories took a lot of infor-

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D. de Decker/G. Dupuis-Masay, "L'episcopat de l'empereur Constantin", *Byzantion* 50 (1980), 118–157.

[98] G. Pasquali, *Hermes* 45 (1910), 382f., 385. For further interpretation of *VC* 4. 31. 54, see J. Speigl, "Eine Kritik an Kaiser Konstantin in der Vita Constantini des Euseb", in E. Suttner and C. Patock, eds., *Wegzeichen, Festgabe H. Biedermann* (Würzburg, 1971), 83–94, esp. 87–94.

mation from Eusebius' *VC*, but this scripture did not become a model for later Christian biography and hagiography as a literary genus.[99] These were much more shaped according to the *Vita Antonii* of Athanasius of Alexandria as a model. Even the legends about Constantine and Helena, the emperor's mother, only seldom went back to Eusebius' *VC*.[100] Eusebius' account about Constantine was too difficult and multiform. The *VC* is handed down in several manuscripts, but mostly as an appendix to his *HE*.[101]

In sum, there is a certain consistency in Eusebius' view of Salvation History from the beginning of his historical work to the end and no desultoriness of thought.[102] But on that basis he also reacted to the great events of his time. He considered the Great Persecution inaugurated by Diocletian, the *konstantinische wende*, and the Christological quarrels of his time to be chief events and deep *caesurae*. Thus, Eusebius developed in a long process and on a firm theological foundation his view of a highly important epoch in the history of Christian culture.

2.2. *Lactantius*

There is no doubt that the characterization as an unpleasant work of *De mortibus persecutorum* expressed by Eberhard Heck is subjective.[103] The writing *De mortibus persecutorum* is the work of a contemporary: it therefore contains important historical information and a first hand account concerning especially events in the eastern parts of the Roman Empire, primarily in Bithynia and the metropolis Nicomedia, where Lactantius was living when he began to write that work. For instance, he reported on the date when the death of Galerius was known in that town in *DMP* 35.4. In *DMP* 35.1 and 48.1 he dated the edicts of the years A.D. 311 and 313. In *DMP* 48.1 and 13 Lactantius described the entrance of Licinius into Nicomedia. Although *DMP* is written in Latin, the traces of eastern origin prevail. Secondly,

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[99] There are only a few exceptions. On VC as source for the Helena legend, see J.W. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta* (Leiden/New York/Köln, 1992), 125–129.

[100] For the low posthumous reputation of the *VC*, see F. Winkelmann, *Eusebius Werke*, I 1 (Berlin, 1991²), XXI–XXV; id., "Die Beurteilung des Eusebius von Caesarea und seiner Vita Constantini im griechischen Osten", *Byzantinistische Beiträge* (Berlin 1964), 91–119 = Winkelmann, *Studien* (Birmingham, 1993), no. XV.

[101] Cf. Winkelmann, *Eusebius Werke* IX–XXVII.

[102] R.M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford, 1980), contests this interpretation.

[103] Heck, *Dualistische Zusätze*, 154 n. 19.

as discussed above, there is left a small possibility that *DMP* is a witness to a Constantinian interpretation of events. Thirdly, as Giuseppe Zecchini underlines, there is another aspect to the importance of *DMP*: this writing is in his view the first Latin history after the time of Antoninus. The regeneration of Latin history in Late Antiquity begins with a Christian work.[104] But this opinion relates primarily to the Latin language.

DMP is distinct from other historiography of its time. We find a detailed account of Lactantius' purpose in his preface and epilogue (*DMP* 1; 52). He intended to give an account of the terrible deaths of the Roman emperors who had persecuted the Christians. The motive was the apologetic aim of demonstrating by way of the history of the persecution that the Christian God is the only true and real godhead. He wanted to give an account of the final victory of the God of the Christians over all His enemies (*DMP* 1.2–7, 50.1.7, 52.3f.). The account of the end of Galerius reflects the description of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes by the author of *2 Maccabees* (chap. 9). There are many more parallels to *2 Maccabees* in *DMP*. With this Jewish and early Christian apologetic tendency was combined the topic of the punishment of all despisers of God. That topic derives from the Roman and the Jewish traditions,[105] but Lactantius subordinated it to the Christian aspect of Salvation History. In the Christian view of Lactantius no pagan emperor can be called just, not even the so-called good emperors.

Lactantius combined a Judaeo-Christian theme with a Roman purpose and a classical rhetorical style. To these impulses he added a genuinely new aspect, since in his view the Last Judgement over the enemies of God takes place in these days already and is evident to everybody.

After a short statement of his purpose Lactantius dealt in a brief manner with the end of the five earlier persecutors Nero, Domitian, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian (*DMP* 2–6). Then in *DMP* 7–9 he neg-

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[104] G. Zecchini, *Ricerche di storiografia latina tardoantica* (Roma, 1993), 9.

[105] Cf. E. Heck, *ME THEOMACHEIN oder die Bestrafung des Gottesverächters* (Frankfurt a. M., 1987), esp. 217–228. For Jewish parallels, see esp. J. Rougé, "Le De Mortibus Persecutorum, 5e livre des Macchabées", *Studia Patristica* 12 (Berlin, 1976), 135–143 and Creed, *op. cit.*, XIf. For the character and the methods used by Lactantius, see e.g. M. Gelzer, *Kleine Schriften* 2 (Wiesbaden, 1963), 378–386; I. Opelt, "Formen der Polemik im Pamphlet De mortibus persecutorum", *JbAC* 16 (1973), 98–105; Christensen, *op. cit.*, 13–20.

atively characterizes the misdeeds and fates of the persecutors of his own days Diocletian, Maximian and Galerius. It was Galerius above all whom Lactantius depicted as a barbarian emperor, uncivilized and uncultured, raging not only against the Christians but also against the Roman culture. In *DMP* 10–16 he gave a detailed account of the beginning of the Great Persecution in Nicomedia and on the gradation of the Anti-Christian measures. Lactantius then described Diocletian's malady and abdication in detail, Galerius' succession to the throne, and finally the installation of the unworthy Maximinus Daia as a Caesar instead of Constantine (*DMP* 17–23). The following chapters (*DMP* 24–30) turn towards the events in the western parts of the empire: Constantine, being protected by God, escaped from the imperial court at Nicomedia and succeeded his father as emperor; Maximianus, being surprised at a murderous plot against his son-in-law Constantine, died in a deplorable fashion; Maxentius the usurper took possession of Rome and Italy, setting forth disorder and other public troubles in the Empire. Lactantius described extensively in *DMP* 31–35 the horrifying malady of Galerius, the most evil persecutor of the Christians in the view of Lactantius, and his death, drawing a parallel between the ending of Antiochus Epiphanes (*2. Macc.* 9.1–29) and that of Galerius. After the edict of tolerance (A.D. 311; quoted in *DMP* 34) the despot Maximinus Daia revived the persecution in the East of the Empire and raged against his subjects, while Diocletian died in distress (*DMP* 36–42). Lactantius wrote fully (*DMP* 39–41) about the case of Valeria, being a victim of Maximinus Daia. Finally Lactantius devoted *DMP* 43–49 to an account of his two heroes—Constantine and Licinius. This is a noteworthy fact. Both these emperors defeated the enemies of God, namely Maxentius and Maximinus Daia, and fought under celestial protection for the independence of the Christians and for the stability of the Roman Empire and the continuance of Roman culture. In comparison with these two heroes, Maxentius and Maximinus Daia came to a bad end. The edict of restitution, which Licinius published in Nicomedia, finished the persecution of the Christians (*DMP* 48.2–12). *DMP* 50–52 finally gave a conclusion, underscoring once more the dreadful end of the enemies of God and the great effect of peace on the Church.

Lactantius' *DMP* had only slight effect on later historians, as one can learn from the poor manuscript tradition. The version of events in the time of the great persecution of the Christians given by Eusebius

has been accepted by all his followers till our century. Lactantius' only effect was actually from his description of Galerius as having initiated the Great Persecution.[106] But other differences between the Eusebian account and *DMP*, especially the positive representation of Licinius as an emperor sympathetic to Christianity and as a collaborator of Constantine, could not assert themselves successfully.

2.3. *Praxagoras*

The short report on the work of Praxagoras made by Photius has unfortunately not provoked interest among scholars of ancient history in proportion to the importance of that work. Praxagoras gave an account about the emperor Constantine and his rule until A.D. 324 as a pagan contemporary and from the viewpoint of an Athenian citizen. It is noteworthy that his report is a positive one, without any critical remarks. However, Praxagoras excluded Constantine's religious policy from his account. We can be sure that Photius would never have passed over such an important theme had he read something about it in his source. Thus it is possible to conclude in an unequivocal manner that Praxagoras did not deal with that question. Two explanations are possible: either he wished to exclude a description of the new imperial orientation, since he could not agree with it as a pagan and preferred to keep silent, or he did not perceive a religious change. The latter seems to be the more plausible explanation. The pagans of the East of the Empire did not realise Constantine's particular interest in the development of the Christian Church before A.D. 324.

The end of Praxagoras' work—with the account on the foundation of Constantinople as a highlight—has been interpreted by Ulrich von Wilamowitz as Praxagoras' handing over his history to the emperor on the occasion of that event. Yet, it is also possible that Praxagoras wrote after A.D. 324, but did not consider the further history of Constantine as brilliant enough to be worth giving an account of it. Eusebius' *HE* also ended with the beginning of Constantine's autocracy.

It corresponds with the custom of his time that Praxagoras begins his biographical opus about Constantine with the prior history. Firstly he gave an account of the development of Constantius, Constantine's

[106] See M. Gelzer, *Kleine Schriften* 2 (Wiesbaden, 1963), 378–386. The same result is reached by Christensen, *op. cit.*, 79f.

father. Only after that did he turn to the history of Maximinus, of Galerius and finally of Diocletian, the last two emperors of the eastern parts of the Empire. This sequence was not appropriate to the real importance of the emperors. After that Praxagoras moved on to the history of his hero. Constantius sent his son to Diocletian's court in Nicomedia.

Praxagoras criticized Galerius for contriving cunning strokes against Constantine, and he called special attention to a fight between the young son of Constantius and a lion. Perceiving the evil aims of Galerius, Constantine escaped to his father in Britannia. After Constantius' death he was appointed successor to his father. In this position he proved himself in battles against Celts and Teutons. Praxagoras characterized Maxentius as an evil person who oppressed his subjects. In order to punish him, Constantine waged battle against him. Finally, Maxentius became the victim of an ambush which he had prepared against Constantine. Constantine's victory was welcomed by the Romans.

Praxagoras considered the cruel oppression of his subjects by Licinius to be the reason for the struggle between Constantine and Licinius. To stop Licinius' crimes, Constantine prepared to make war on him. Yet, this war did not take place, since Licinius gave in and promised to observe all his treaties with Constantine. Thus, according to Praxagoras, the *bellum Cibalense* did not happen. He only described the second war of Constantine against Licinius and Constantine's definite victory. But he mentioned neither the relationship between Constantine and Licinius nor his assassination at the end. Finally, there follows the account on the foundation of Constantinople. It is possible thus far to reconstruct Praxagoras' basic themes and opinions, following Photius' short report.

Praxagoras' judgement of the tetrarchic emperors does not differ from the Eusebian view, except for Eusebius' Christian interpretation. Photius, too, was astonished about the fact that a pagan author described the first Christian emperor in such a positive way. It is very regrettable that Praxagoras' important work has not come down to us.

2.4. *Origo Constantini Imperatoris*

The *Origo*, too, is written by a pagan author. He also avoided any reference to Constantine's religious stance and religious decisions, although he gave an account of the whole reign of the emperor.

This is most evident in his description of the death of Constantine. He remarks on neither the emperor's Christian baptism shortly before his death nor his sepulchre built as a Constantinian mausoleum in the Apostle Church.

The anonymous author excluded all aspects concerning religious affairs in such a thorough way that a later Christian redactor only had to replace a few passages of the original writing by quotations from the history of the Christian Orosius. As further arguments for the fact that the author of the *Origo* was a pagan believer, Zecchini pointed firstly to the avoiding of any report on Constantine's vision and conversion to Christian belief, and secondly to the criticism of the excessive cost of the foundation of Constantinople (*Origo* 30). None of the Christian authors had made such a criticism.[107]

The aim of the author is not quite clear. The *Origo* did observe, for the most part, the rules of a biography of an emperor, but differed from them for instance by extensive reports on the events which took place in Italy (*Origo* 5–10) or by the chronological arrangement of the historical facts. However, a critical examination is complicated, since we must suppose that the text handed down to us contains gaps. Finally, the heading of that work—*Origo Constantini Imperatori*—does not really correspond with a biography which gives an account of the times before the birth of the emperor until his death.

Nevertheless the *Origo* is very important for our knowledge of the developments in the early fourth century, for it delivers much precise and valuable information—especially about the early times of the Constantinian rule and about the rise of Constantine, which can only be found here.[108] Although T.D. Barnes refers to some errors in that writing in defining Severus' domain, such errors are very few.[109] The work is an important source especially for the events of the years 306 to 311, and for the complicated relations and conflicts between Constantine and Licinius.

The account begins with the events before Constantine, with Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine, and his family (*Origo* 1). The description of the emperor's mother Helena as *vilissima* and the characterization of Constantine as *litteris minus instructus* (*Origo* 2) are

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[107] Zecchini, *op. cit.*, 33, cf. König, *op. cit.*, 171f.

[108] See on this aspect especially E. Klebs, "Das Valesische Bruchstück zur Geschichte Constantins", *Philologus* 47 (1889), 53–80.

[109] Barnes, *Phoenix* 43 (1989), 158. For another error, see König, *op. cit.*, 11.

remarkable. The anonymous author also describes the relations between the young Constantine and Galerius as strained, because of Galerius' attempt to prevent Constantine from returning to his father, although Constantius Chlorus had demanded that. Finally, Constantine managed to escape, and after the death of his father he was appointed to the dignity of Caesar *omnium militum consensu* (*Origo* 2–4).

Origo 5–11 gave an account of the rule of the Caesars of the second tetrarchy, of Maxentius' usurpation, of the struggles with him, and of the death of Galerius. The author called attention to the drinking excesses of Severus and Galerius, and he described both as drunkards. On the other side *Origo* characterized the government of Maxentius as not especially bad. It listed only the unsuccessful attempts of Galerius and the eastern Caesars to put an end to Maxentius' usurpation.

Origo 12 abruptly begins with the account of Constantine's war against Maxentius which finished with Constantine's victory before Rome. Yet nothing is said about any artifice on the part of Maxentius, which had finally led Maxentius himself to death. Perhaps we have to suppose a gap in the transmitted text.

The centrepiece of *Origo* 14–29 is the account about the conflicts between Constantine and Licinius. On that subject the *Origo* gives exact information, which is missing from the rest of our sources—for instance, the events relating to Caesar Bassianus, the husband of Constantine's sister Anastasia, and his brother Senicio (*Origo* 14). These conflicts the *Origo* interpreted as the beginning and cause of the hostility between Constantine and Licinius. In connection with the *bellum Cibalense*, the *Origo* gives much information about the number of soldiers and the places of the battles. Constantine is described as a victor and as a hero (*Origo* 16–18).

As causes for the second war between Constantine and Licinius *Origo* lists, on the one hand, the claims of Constantine regarding the dominion of Licinius and, on the other hand, the tyrannical methods by which Licinius ruled. His *avaritia*, *crudelitas*, and *libido* were accentuated (*Origo* 22f.). Both in *Origo* 15 and 23 the anonymous author emphazises that both emperors had an interest in these wars. In connection with the second war *Origo* also gives information not to be found in the other sources. It notes the names of the places of battles like Callipolis or Chrysopolis. It describes Crispus as a reliable assistant of his father Constantine. Crispus participated in Constantine's victories. The author knew that the emperor was

wounded in the battle. But there is no remark about Crispus' origins. The account of the second war ended with Constantia's acting as a peacemaker and with the arresting of Licinius (*Origo* 23–28).

The later Christian redactor erased the account about the further destiny and the death of Licinius and the role of Constantine in these affairs. He substituted for that passage a quotation from Orosius: that Christian author absolved Constantine from any reproach of perjury and assassination. Perhaps the author of the *Origo* criticized Constantine on this point (*Origo* 29). Yet this is only supposition and cannot be proved.

The anonymous author described the foundation of Constantinople as a highlight of the Constantinian rule, just as Praxagoras did. The new capital is interpreted as a competitor of Rome, but there is no reference to the new religious significance of that town (*Origo* 30).

Origo 31–35 just looks like a supplement that is moreover disturbed by long interpolations from Orosius' history. Thus, the *Origo* reported only the war against the Goths (*Origo* 31); but it did report the appointment of four Caesars—beside Constantine's sons Constantine, Constantius, and Constans the author also named Dalmatius as Caesar, and Hannibalianus as *rex regum Ponticarum gentium*—and finally the death of Constantine (*Origo* 35). The writer made no reference to the assassination of Crispus and Fausta, to the trinitarian quarrels, to the important role of Helena at the Constantinian court. We can no longer form an opinion about the question, whether the Christian redactor wiped out such notes or the anonymous pagan author wished to describe his hero without any blemish. The heading of the story as *Origo Constantini* in any case corresponds to the real contents, that is to the description primarily of the rise of Constantine to autocracy.

3. *Conclusion*

There is no doubt that Eusebius has an outstanding place among the historians of the age of Constantine the Great, because he established a series of new standards for historiography. His aims were somewhat different from those of his pagan contemporaries and predecessors. These new standards ensued from his Christian intention. Eusebius followed on the one hand the principles of the classical historiographical tradition, on the other hand he criticised some sup-

positions of Christian chronography like those introduced by Africanus and Hippolytus of Rome: Eusebius did not completely break with the classical principles of historiography.

It was Eusebius' credibility that was a stimulating target for scholars of Late Antiquity and especially of the Constantinian era. Yet, the various questions which arise would only find satisfactory answers by taking into consideration the entire context of his work, of his aims and of his interpretations of historical development as a whole in his view of Salvation History.

The Christian rhetor Lactantius also trod a new path of historiography especially by his pointed criticism of the rule of Roman emperors. But he was more influenced by Roman and Jewish apologetic stimuli so as to influence the following Christian historiography in an ongoing manner.

It would be improper to disregard both pagan historians—Praxagoras and the anonymous author of the *Origo Constantini Imperatoris*—beside the Christians Eusebius and Lactantius. Unfortunately, the work of Praxagoras was not handed down to us and the *Origo* proposes a series of problems which can hardly be solved. Both are following the classical principles, methods, and rhetorical style of antique historiography. It is especially noteworthy that both these pagan contemporaries of the Constantinian age regarded the emperor Constantine with deep respect and with real veneration; although the *Origo* may have contained some critical reports in the original text.

The impact of the accounts of Eusebius, Lactantius, Praxagoras, and the anonymous author on later Christian and pagan historiography was not without interruptions and changes: since the government and work of Julian, pagan historiography altered the positive description of the first Christian emperor and did not exclude aspects of religious politics any more. Pagan historians on the whole gave up their neutral stance in favour of a polemical one. The later Christian historians, on the other hand, turned again in many ways to the principles, and especially to the rhetorical style, of classical historiography, though acknowledging the great importance of Eusebius' historical works. Later Christian chroniclers not only adhered to the model of Eusebius' chronicle work, but went further back to the writings of Eusebius' Christian predecessors Iulius Africanus and Hippolytus.

We may conclude that it was Eusebius who, among the historians of the epoch of the *konstantinische wende*, has had the greatest influence on later historical principles, methods, knowledge, and interpretation.

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CHAPTER TWO

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS

Guy Sabbah

For a long time Ammianus Marcellinus, the greatest Latin historiographer of the fourth century, suffered the effects of belonging to both an era and a literary period considered decadent. As a result, research was restricted to his hypothetical written sources. The *Res gestae* were seen as entirely dependent on these, and even as incapable of providing a coherent synthesis of them.[1] The style was considered "unbearable" because of its "bombast" and "asianic rhetoric" and of the mass of Greek turns of phrase barely hidden beneath the author's laboriously acquired and stilted Latin.[2]

The concept of a 'Theodosian Renaissance' and a more positive evaluation of late Latin as well as of the literary genres and styles of a period recognized as creative[3] went some way towards weakening these prejudices. Since the first steps in this direction taken by W. Ensslin and E.A. Thompson,[4] studies—both those looking at details and more comprehensive views—have proliferated.[5] Following

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[1] On this *Quellenforschung*, see O. Seeck, "Zur Chronologie und Quellenkritik des Ammianus Marcellinus", *Hermes* 41 (1906), 481–559; W. Klein, "Die Quellen Ammians in der Darstellung von Julians Perserzug", *RhM* 71 (1916), 461–506; R. Laqueur, *Probleme der Spätantike* (Stuttgart, 1930).

[2] E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa* (Leipzig, 1898), II, 647 and 650.

[3] J. Fontaine, "Unité et diversité du mélange des genres et des tons chez quelques écrivains latins de la fin du IV^{e} siècle: Ausone, Ambroise, Ammien", in *Christianisme et formes littéraires de l'Antiquité tardive en Occident*, Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique, XXIII, Vandoeuvres-Geneva, Fondation Hardt, 1977, 425–472, and id., "Le style d'Ammien et l'esthétique théodosienne", in *Cognitio gestorum. The historiographical art of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Amsterdam, 1992), 27–37.

[4] W. Ensslin, *Die Geschichtsschreibung und Weltanschauung des Ammianus Marcellinus. Klio*, Beiheft 16, 1923; E.A. Thompson, *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Cambridge, 1947).

[5] P.M. Camus, *Ammien Marcellin, témoin des courants culturels et religieux à la fin du IV^{e} siècle* (Paris, 1967); R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus. A Study of his Historiography and political Thought* (Brussels, 1975, Coll. Latomus 141); G. Sabbah, *La méthode d'Ammien Marcellin. Recherches sur la construction du discours historique dans les* Res gestae (Paris, 1978); K. Rosen, *Ammianus Marcellinus*. Erträge der Forschung 183 (Darmstadt, 1982); J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989).

C. di Spigno, G. Calboli, L. Alfano Caranci and J.M. Alonso Nuñez,[6] we have taken stock of the prevailing critical trends and indicated some directions that could be developed.[7]

In the meantime, Dutch Ammianus scholars have pursued the commentary of the *Res gestae*,[8] and the edition of Ammianus in the Collection des Universités de France, with an extensive commentary, has been completed.[9] J. Matthews' monograph, published in 1989,[10] has proved to be a masterly historical synthesis, which promises to remain relevant for a long time. It has given the impulse for an international colloquium resulting in substantial proceedings.[11] Among theses on this subject defended in France recently, those by L. Mary[12] and A. Foucher[13] are particularly noteworthy. There has also been a parallel development of studies on Ammianus' religion and his relation to Christianity.[14] The need for new approaches has led to some radical re-questioning, as exemplified by Ch.W. Fornara[15] and

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[6] C. di Spigno, "Aspetti e problemi della storia degli studi ammianei", *Helikon* 3 (1963), 524–534; G. Calboli, "La credibilità di Ammiano Marcellino e la sua arte espositiva", *BStudLat* 4 (1974), 67–103; L. Alfano Caranci, "Alcuni orientamenti critici dei recenti studi su Ammiano Marcellino", *BStudLat* 9 (1979), 71–82; J.M. Alonso-Nuñez, "Ammianus Marcellinus in der Forschung von 1970 bis 1980", *Anzeiger f. d. Altertumswissenschaft* 36, Heft 1/2 (1983), 1–18.

[7] G. Sabbah, "Ammien Marcellin. Quelques orientations récentes de la recherche", *Kentron*, Caen, 1987, 173–188.

[8] Last volume published to date: J. den Boeft, J.W. Drijvers, D. den Hengst, H.C. Teitler, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXIV* (Leiden, Brill, 2002). See also J. Szidat, *Historischer Kommentar zu Ammianus Marcellinus Buch XX–XXI. Historia* Einzelschriften, Heft 31, 1977, Wiesbaden, Heft 38, ib. 1981, Heft 89, Stuttgart, 1996.

[9] J. Fontaine, E. Frézouls, J.D. Berger, *Histoire*, vol. III, bks. XX–XXII (Paris, CUF, 1996); G. Sabbah, L. Angliviel de la Beaumelle, *Histoire*, vol. VI, bks. XXIX–XXXI (Paris, CUF, 1999).

[10] *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989, Duckworth).

[11] J. den Boeft, D. den Hengst, H.C. Teitler (eds.), *Cognitio gestorum . . .*, (Amsterdam, 1992).

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[13] Historia proxima poetis. *L'influence de la poésie épique sur le style des historiens latins de Salluste à Ammien Marcellin* (Brussels, 2000, Coll. Latomus nº 225).

[14] The monographs by L.R. Rike, Apex omnium: *Religion in the* Res gestae *of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Berkeley, 1987) and V. Neri, *Ammiano e il cristianesimo. Religione e politica nelle* "Res gestae" *di Ammiano Marcellino* (Bologna, CLUEB, 1985). Also, id., "Ammianus' definition of Christianity as *absoluta et simplex religio*", in *Cognitio gestorum . . .*, 59–66. R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus . . .*, 123–136, and J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire . . .*, 435–451, express balanced views on Ammianus' attitude towards Christianity.

[15] Ch.W. Fornara, "Studies in Ammianus Marcellinus. I. The letter of Libanius

T.D. Barnes.[16] The latter favours the problematics of K. Rosen, G. Calboli, T.G. Elliott and J. Szidat[17] over J. Matthews' measured conclusions, seeing Ammianus more as a writer of fiction and an anti-Christian polemicist than as a trustworthy historian.

Thus the interpretative problems raised by the *Res gestae* are far from being solved. More than ever the experts uphold different or mutually opposed hypotheses about questions that are considered fundamental. While this proves the live and open nature of the critique of Ammianus, it would be dangerous to confine oneself to some special points, where it proliferates without any true usefulness. Many exegetes and commentators can be found on all-too-well-trodden paths, where each exerts himself to invalidate the other's arguments: Ammianus' origins, the meaning—or meanings—of the final self-portrait, his religion and especially his attitude towards Christianity, his relation to Tacitus and, most of all, the 'deformation' that his political or moral affiliation and, to an even greater degree, his 'art of representation', are supposed to inflict on 'reality'.

These questions are important, but they are not questions to which it would be possible to give *one* clear answer without taking into account the man's complexity and, first of all, his equally true and deep relationships with his two countries. Why ask the question "Greek *or* Roman?", when Ammianus declares himself Greek *and* Roman? Or the question "Antiochian or non-Antiochian by origin and in effect?", when it is more relevant to consider what his *work* owes to Antioch? Why restrict his attitude towards religion to a simplified dilemma between "fanatically anti-Christian pagan" and "enlightened sympathizer with the new religion"? After all, these two extremes are balanced in Ammianus Marcellinus, and neither the denominational affiliations of various figures nor the possible religious implications of the 'intrigues' in which they are involved constitute the main criterion of his historical judgement.[18]

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and Ammianus' connection with Antioch", *Historia* 41 (1992), 328–344, rejects the idea of Ammianus' Antiochian origins.

[16] T.D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality* (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1998).

[17] K. Rosen, *Studien zur Darstellungskunst und Glaubwürdigkeit des Ammianus Marcellinus* (Bonn, 1970); G. Calboli, "La credibilità di Ammiano Marcellino e la sua arte espositiva", *BStudLat* 4 (1974), 67–103; T.G. Elliott, *Ammianus Marcellinus and fourth-century History* (Sarasota and Toronto, 1983); J. Szidat, "Ammian und die historische Realität", in *Cognitio gestorum* . . ., 107–116.

[18] We are using the word 'intrigue' in the sense applied to it by P. Veyne in *Comment on écrit l'histoire* (Paris, 1971).

Without attempting to sidestep these problems, we will first provide an overview of the dimensions and content of his work, as well as of the principles guiding his composition. We will then move on to the author's political and, in particular, moral and aesthetic standpoints, and suggest a historiographical solution to a number of 'contradictions' found in the *Res gestae*: namely that of *one* particular progressive option, which is at the same time consciously and deliberately employed by Ammianus for the sake of *one* particular perspective, i.e. that of 'grand history'. This will be done with a view to addressing more objectively—that is, within the work rather than alongside it or on the outside of it—the apparent paradoxes of the *Res gestae*: the paradoxes of a history that is at the same time very personal *and* very objective, very focused *and* very wide in scope, very classical in its approach *and* strongly rooted in late antiquity, very 'isolated' *as well as* connected by multiple links with reality and with contemporary intellectual and literary circles. These paradoxes constitute the rich texture of the *Res gestae*, and one must therefore strive to understand them by taking into account how a work that has matured with its author for more than thirty years incorporates his personal chronology, his 'lived life'. One also needs to be aware of the deep-reaching connection between this work and its breeding-ground, the 'world of late antiquity', which sometimes appears strange, because it is so extremely wide open, totalizing and 'comprehensive', and because it bridges quite a few gulfs—which are as distinctly drawn as they are artificial—beginning with the one that is said to separate pagan and Christian works or circles.

Title and problematic dimensions

The title *Res gestae* is confirmed by the *explicit* and *incipit* of the only complete ancient MS for the 18 surviving books, the 9th-century *Fuldensis* (now *Vat. lat.* 1873). Did this fairly rare title (one could cite the extremely official *Res gestae divi Augusti* or, at the opposite end of the scale, the strongly novelistic *Res gestae Alexandri Magni* by Julius Valerius) impose itself by exclusion? In fact, for the whole of an account spanning the time between the rule of Nerva (96) and the death of Valens (378), Ammianus could use neither the title *Historiae*, appropriate for the extant account of contemporary history (353/4–378; bks. 14–31) only, nor *Annales* which would fit only the books preceding

that history. Besides, the title *Annales* would have been ill-suited to an account that takes great liberties with the annalist method.

It seems rather that positive criteria influenced the choice of title. Perhaps modesty—or its corresponding *topos*: this account is not a *Historia*, but merely a report of things that I have done or observed, of notes taken from life, in the tradition of the *commentarii*? But this intention would fit only the part in which the memorialist method is dominant, especially books 14 to 19. Or should one rather see an intention to emphasize, in the sense that the *Res gestae Iuliani*, the exploits of Ammianus' hero Julian, correspond to those of the heroes of the past, beginning with Alexander?[19] However, again this would be valid for part of the work only, i.e. for the history of Julianus Caesar and then Augustus (books 15–21 and 22–25 respectively). All things considered, the chosen title appears to be a declaration—and a promise—of objectivity: I tell the *facts* as they *happened*.

The fact that the work is incomplete—confirmed by the *explicit/incipit* of book 14 and of the subsequent books—raises the question of its original length and structure and, on the other hand, of its methodology as well as the earliest and latest possible dates of its composition. The first explicit external testimony—in the sixth-century writer Priscianus—is a quotation from book 14, the first of the extant books.[20] This suggests that, already by the time that grammarian lived in Constantinople, the first available book of Ammianus, that is to say, the first to catch the eye of a teacher looking for grammatical examples, was the fourteenth.[21]

The most straightforward hypothesis is that the lost books 1–13 covered the period between 96 and 353, and books 14–31 cover that from 353/4 to 378. Most critics believe this to be the case, whilst being conscious of the lack of proportion: is it possible that

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[19] See the beginning of book 16 (ch. 1, 1–5), especially § 2: *Quia igitur res magnae quas per Gallias uirtute felicitateque correxit multis ueterum factis fortibus praestant* . . . and the final portrait at 25,4, in particular § 1: *uir profecto heroicis connumerandus ingeniis, claritudine rerum et coalita maiestate conspicuus* . . .

[20] Cf. Priscianus 11,51 (Keil, *Gramm. lat.* II, 487): *ut indulsi indulsum uel indultum, unde Marcellinus rerum gestarum XIIII: tamquam licentia crudelitati indulta.*

[21] One would think that if Priscianus (11,51; Keil, *Gramm. lat.* II, 487,1) had had the books—or part of the books—preceding book 14, he would have taken an example from one of those books, having gone through them first. Cf. J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire* . . ., 6 and 477, n. 7.

Ammianus dispatched the account of more than 250 years (96–353) in thirteen books and spends eighteen books on a detailed history of only 25 years (354–378)? What is more, cross-references to events, people and scenes discussed in preceding books do not suggest a very succinct treatment of the subject-matter in the lost books.[22]

Therefore, another hypothesis has recently been taken up again:[23] according to this, Ammianus composed *two* works of history. The first has been lost and what we have is only the second part (books 14–31) of the second work which, on its own, contained 31 books. The term of the first work would have been the beginning of the reign of Constantine (306) or his death (337). While theoretically possible, this conjecture is not supported by any concrete evidence. Moreover, the conjectured time limit is arbitrary: the assumed first work could equally well have finished—like the *Historia Augusta*—just before the reign of Diocletian. To take Constantine as the limit corresponds more to the division established by present-day historians between the pagan and the Christian Empire than to a break which men in late antiquity would already have perceived clearly as determinative.

On the contrary, by beginning with the reign of Nerva, Ammianus wanted to continue the *Histories* and, beyond them, the *Annals* of Tacitus. He may also have wanted to present a work of the same length as that of his predecessor. Now, his contemporary St. Jerome confirms that the *Histories* and the *Annals* together were considered as one single work comprising 30 books.[24] In that case, Ammianus'

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[22] In these references (29, 5, 16 and 29, 6, 1), note the use of *docere*, which indicates a detailed and complete treatment (A. Hus, Docere *et les mots de la famille de* docere, Paris, 1965, 113).

[23] H. Michael, *Die verlorenen Bücher des Ammianus Marcellinus* (dissertation, Breslau, 1880); H.T. Rowell, "The first mention of Rome in Ammianus' extant books and the nature of the History", in *Mélanges Carcopino*, Paris, 1966, 839–848; T.D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation* . . ., 26–31 (according to which the *Res gestae* had 36 books, the first 18 having been lost). Michael's hypothesis is rejected by L. Jeep, 'Die verlorenen Bücher des Ammianus', *RhM*, 3rd series, 43 (1888), 60–72; A. Momigliano, "The lonely historian Ammianus Marcellinus", *ASNP*, ser. III, IV/4 (1974), 1393–1407; R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus* . . ., 12f.; J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire* . . ., 27–30.

[24] Comment. ad Zach., 3, 14. While recording the accepted opinion (18 books of *Annals* and 12 of *Histories*), E. Cizek, *Histoire et historiens à Rome dans l'Antiquité* (Lyon, 1995), p. 223, believes that the *Histories* could have had not 12, but 14 or more books. Thus the years 69–96 would have been related in 12 or 14 books of *Histories*, and the years 14 to 68 in 18 or 16 books of *Annals*. Here too, there is a

book 31 would be an addition or rather an expansion because of an overflow having led him to exceed the intended total. Therefore, taking into account the prefaces of books 15 and 26, our scheme is in three parts:

1) books 1–14 (96–353/354), of which the first 13 are lost and book 14 is extant;
2) books 15–30, extant (with two distinct parts, 1.15–25 and 2.26–30);
3) book 31 as an addition (because of the overflow and division of book 30).

This scheme assumes neither the composition of an enormous work (about 60 books) nor the disparition of its first part, which would need to be explained by reasons other than the vagaries of manuscript transmission. It considers book 14 as evidence of the first part of a single work:[25] in that first part the historian worked at his own rhythm without committing himself to an equal or regular treatment of each year, but rather summarizing (*summatim*) certain episodes or even periods and, on the other hand, picking out (*carptim*) and recording in detail certain episodes or reigns considered important, glorious or meaningful, such as those of Trajan, Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus, in order to emphasize them. The extant books show the same kind of liberty: for example, Julian's Persian campaign (spring/summer 363) alone occupies three books (23, 24 and 25). Historians often develop their account in more detail as they approach their contemporary present; there is a superabundance of information and, given the lack of distance, it becomes difficult to make a choice. With book 14 or the next,[26] the *nature* of the information,

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lack of proportion between the *Histories* (an average of two years per book, in a ratio of 25 to 12) and the *Annals* (three and a half years per book, a ratio of 55 to 16).

[25] This is also the opinion of J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire* . . ., 30: "It still seems best therefore to regard the early books of Ammianus as little more than a substantial introduction to the history of the present age", and of E. Cizek, *Histoire et historiens* . . ., 307: "la tradition historique latine voulait qu'on insiste sur les événements vécus par l'auteur lui-même . . . Ne manquons pas de nous rappeler que l'œuvre d'Ammien relevait du genre des *res gestae*, comportant toujours une brève 'archéologie', avant la chronique contemporaine".

[26] See the preface of book 15: *Vtcumque potui ueritatem scrutari . . ., residua quae secuturus aperiet textus pro uirium captu limatius absoluemus, nihil obtrectatores longi, ut putant, operis formidantes*.

too, changes: written evidence which lacks originality and lends itself to summarizing is replaced by richer and more precise personal information, which is presented by the soldier-historian with a willingness that makes him disinclined to make cuts in his memories.

From Antioch to Rome: The genesis of the Res gestae

The *Res gestae* were composed, 'recited' and published (at least in their final phase) in Rome. Ammianus' Antiochian origins, however, have recently be contested by Ch.W. Fornara.[27] This contestation would only be of relatively small importance, if it concerned merely an obscure point in Ammianus' biography.

In fact, its implication is more far-reaching, because the *Res gestae* are very closely connected with their author's life and even dependent on it. To a large extent the first books (14–19) are the memoirs of a general staff officer who was an active participant in a lot of the events he relates. His more detached account of the Persian war (books 23–25) is still that of a direct participant and observer. And it is generally agreed that the episode about the trials at Antioch further on is based on the memories and the emotions of a directly—and painfully—involved witness.[28] Whether or not this participant/observer/witness is from Antioch has important repercussions on our interpretation. Was Ammianus connected by a common origin with the persecuted and victims of the trials at Antioch? Depending on the answer, one will judge his method differently and measure the subjectivity or objectivity of his presentation in different ways. Do the author's Antiochian origins play the defining part in his very black and biased depiction of the actions of Gallus at Antioch in 353/354? Can his severe criticism of the policy deployed by Julian at Antioch in 362 against the *curiales* of that city be explained, if not

[27] Ch. W. Fornara, "Studies in Ammianus Marcellinus. I. The letter of Libanius . . .", *Historia* 41 (1992), 328–344, followed by G.W. Bowersock in *Journal of Roman Studies* 80 (1990), 277–284, and T.D. Barnes, "Ammianus Marcellinus and his world" (review article), *Classical Philology* 88 (1993), 55–70. *Contra* J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire* . . ., 478–479, id., "The origin of Ammianus", *Classical Quarterly* 44, 1 (1994), 252–269, and G. Sabbah, "Ammien Marcellin, Libanius, Antioche et la date des derniers livres des *Res gestae*", *Cassiodorus* 3 (1997), 89–116.

[28] See 29, 2, 4: *omnes ea tempestate uelut in Cimmeriis tenebris reptabamus.*

by Ammianus' membership of the *curia*, at least by his personal links of solidarity or even of kinship with some members of that class?

At least in one point Ch.W. Fornara is right: nowhere does Ammianus explicitly state or claim Antiochian origins; he merely declares that he is *Graecus* and says that he knows from experience, having lived in the East, the dishonesty of the lawyers of that part of the world.[29] However, Fornara's demonstration—which refuses to identify with our historian the Markellinos to whom the sophist Libanius of Antioch addresses a letter in 392 as to a compatriot established in Rome—fails to convince.[30] His brittle and easily reversible arguments do not stand up to the deep and continuous familiarity that the historian demonstrates *vis-à-vis* Antioch and its inhabitants. Whether or not chance had made Ammianus a *native* of Antioch, his work at any rate is profoundly Antiochian. Or to be more exact, it is balanced between two poles, Antioch and Rome, which are of equal importance for the construction of his life and that of his literary project.

The chosen ending-point—Adrianople 378—merits some reflection, even if may seem now that it imposes itself by being a key moment in history. This choice could also be seen as a 'farewell to arms', both in Ammianus' life and for the construction of his historical discourse. It would seem that around that date Ammianus retired from his military career, which at first took place in outposts and was then probably continued in a general staff office. It is, after all, difficult to envisage this man made for action quit the army for good at the age of barely thirty, even and especially if in embarking on his career he had nourished the project of a historical work and conceived of the *militia* as a privileged observation point.

It is not unjustified to assume that the limits of his extant work—353/4–378—correspond to the beginning and end of the 'normal' career of a *miles* extending over the perhaps not statutory, but at least frequent length of twenty-five years. This career would have been closely linked for a long time with his historiographical project (and even from a certain point onwards subordinated to it), as being the best means for participating in history in the making, then

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[29] See 30, 4, 4: *absolutis super eius (= professionis oratorum forensium) indignitate paucis, quam in illis (= eois) partibus agens expertus sum . . .*

[30] Letter 1063 (Förster); for its text and a translation, see G. Sabbah, "Ammien Marcellin . . .", *Cassiodorus* 3, 114–115.

observing it in a more detached way, also for having access to a great number of oral testimonies and written documents, without underestimating the importance of the general competence acquired by experience, which makes the difference between Polybius and Timaeus, the armchair historian and the 'pragmatic' historian. Ammianus ends his work by evoking the effective action of the master of the *militia*, Julius. Beyond the timely token of respect, does Ammianus not want to thank him for more extensive informations and suggest that he was able to work at his *History* from the headquarters of Julius, a distant successor of Ursicinus?

Ammianus' historical vocation was awakened at an early stage at Antioch, when he became conscious of being in one of the main places where the history of the Empire was being made, and of having the opportunity to observe it at close quarters and even to take part in it directly in the tracks of his two great men: Ursicinus, one of whose faithful *Protectores domestici* he was, and then Julian himself. Ammianus knew him by reputation in Gaul, then more closely in Antioch, and in 363 followed him into the heart of Persia. Although the rôle of a lively and faithful memory remains fundamental, Ammianus was also able to collect, from his youth, personal notes, observations, records of conversations and of topography, all kinds of documents to be elaborated when the time came.

When he reached maturity, what had been modestly planned as memoirs like the many contemporary *commentarii/hypomnemata*,[31] expanded into a more ambitious composition, something more like a panegyric to Julian's glory.[32] What finally, more than any ideological or religious reason, made him leave Antioch—turned too much towards the East and too lacking in Western documentation—were his hero's unfinished career, the realization that the history of one man, however great, could not by itself constitute the grand history he had in mind, and his patriotic and literary intention of contributing by his writings to the greatness of Rome, which he had until then served with the weapon. The search for documents to write a global and complete history of the Empire could find its true

[31] We have the fragments, or know of the existence, of memoirs by Magnus of Carrhae, Eutychianus of Cappadocia, Callistus, Seleucus and Philagrius, who all participated in the Persian campaign, as well as by Julian himself (the *biblidion* about the battle of Strasbourg, its antecedents and its consequences).

[32] See 16, 1, 3: *quicquid narrabitur . . . ad laudatiuam paene materiam pertinebit.*

dimension only in the city that was the memory of the Empire. Rome remained the seat of precious storehouses of archives: the *Tabularium principis*, the *Tabularium Senatus*, the archives of the city prefecture, of the *Vicarius Vrbis*, the prefect of the annona, the *Comes sacrarum largitionum* and the *scrinium memoriae*, not to mention the many private libraries containing the papers of the great families.[33] If they remained jealously closed for some time to the freshly arrived *peregrinus*,[34] they became accessible to him as soon as his talent became known and powerful friends such as Eutherius and Hypatius recommended him to the *nobiles*.

His arrival and establishment in Rome belong to the beginning of the 380s: in the satire at 14, 6, the detail of expression shows that, although the newly arrived Ammianus was not expelled when famine threatened in 383/384, he suffered from seeing the impresarii of innumerable dancing-girls preferred to the *sectatores liberalium disciplinarum*, for whom he felt affinity and solidarity.[35] It is difficult to establish the chronology of the composition and editing of the *Res gestae* over a period of between ten and fifteen years. The work nevertheless provides sufficient chronological clues for us to be certain that it was well on its way between 390 and 392. Since it contains no anticipation going beyond that period, it has been suggested that it was already finished at that point.[36]

This is true for the part that ends at the close of book 25, but letter 1063 of Libanius, dated 392, encourages its addressee to carry on with his work. Rather than being a banal compliment, this means that the sophist, one of the leading depositaries of the memory of Julian, approved of the intention—which Ammianus probably had already—to continue the work beyond the philosopher-emperor's death,[37] and did not consider it a betrayal of the latter's cult. On

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[33] For an overview, see E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972); more specifically, G. Cencetti, "Tabularium Principis", in *Studi di paleografia, diplomatica, storia e araldica in onore di C. Manaresi* (Milan, 1953), 133–166.

[34] See 14, 6, 18: *bibliothecis sepulchrorum ritu in perpetuum clausis*.

[35] The present tense *licet uidere* is linked directly by an *et* indicating the consequences (= and so it happens that) with the preceding sentence: actors, three-thousand dancing-girls and as many impresarii have been kept in Rome, and those who have also remained in the City (this means that Ammianus is one of these privileged people!) can (*presently*) see these women with curled hair swirling in their dance.

[36] J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire . . .*, 27.

[37] It is possible that Ammianus confided this intention to some associates of Theodosius who were returning to the East in 391, and that they told the sophist about it: J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire . . .*, 8–9.

the other hand, with some of its silences,[38] its cautious expressions[39] and its moral atmosphere dominated by uncertainty and anxiety, this last part of the work shows the mark of the troubled years of the 'pagan reaction' of 392–394. It is during this period and most certainly beyond it up to at least 395, that Ammianus drafted the six books which he had not planned originally, no doubt encouraged by the success of the preceding books, evidence for which is given by Libanius and, in its ironic manner, the *Historia Augusta*.[40]

When its probable genesis is considered in this way from the first notes taken from life until its complete and definitive publication, Ammianus' work involves at least thirty years of his existence, even though the decisive period of writing and editing is concentrated between 380 and 395. Despite the impartiality and objectivity professed by him,[41] it carries the discreet marks of the principal crises and developments of his times.

From the structure to the content of the Res gestae

Antioch and Rome are the two constant poles of interest, the alternating of which is the main structuring element of the account. It is not so much the subject-matter coming from the outside—facts, events, persons or places—that engenders and imposes the literary structure, as rather the choice, made by the historian, of a certain type of intellectual and literary structure based on alternation, contrast and symmetry which gives the *Res gestae* shape and meaning. This is the case for the large units, the books (which alone are envisaged here), and at the same time for the episodes and even the mini-narratives.

Book 14 is strongly dominated by Antioch: the tyranny of Caesar Gallus in Antioch brings about his condemnation by the emperor

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[38] Concerning the cause, date and responsibility for the execution of Theodosius the Elder. The same questions are left unanswered for Maximinus.

[39] The story about the tripod oracle (29, 1–2) avoids any too precise allusion to the name of the 'perfect' emperor who is to succeed Valens.The description of Theodosius at 29, 6, 15 as *princeps postea perspectissimus* is carefully balanced so as not to err by either excess or default.

[40] R. Syme, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Historia Augusta* (Oxford, 1968).

[41] See 31, 16, 9: *opus ueritatem professum numquam, ut arbitror, sciens silentio ausus corrumpere uel mendacio.*

Constantius and his execution (chs. 1, 7, 9, 11). However, chapter 6, with the liveliness of its satirical attack against the vices of the Roman *plebs* and especially the Senate, guarantees the colourful presence of the western pole.

By contrast, the latter dominates book 15, its main episodes being Silvanus' usurpation in Colonia, subjugated by Ursicinus, sent from the East (chs. 5–6), and the solemn elevation in Milan of Julian to the dignity of Caesar (ch. 8). In close continuity with the preceding book, book 16 relates the new Caesar's successes in Gaul (chs. 1–5), culminating in the victory of Argentoratum (ch. 12). It is also the starting-point of a systematic parallel, which will continue to be elaborated until the end of book 21, between Julian, the actual victor, and Constantius, parading his fictitious triumph in Rome (ch. 10). Although book 17 is still dominated by the figure of Julian and his victories against the Germans (chs. 1–3 and 8–10), it provides variety by making room for Constantius' wars against the Sarmatians and the Quadi (chs. 12–13) and introducing a new oriental theme, namely Romano-Persian relations, with an exchange of threatening letters (chs. 5 and 14).

The eastern pole becomes prevalent in book 18, which is dominated by the first hostilities carried on to Roman soil by the Persian king Sapor (chs. 4–10). Although his immediate superior, Ursicinus, is removed by Constantius, the personal adventures of Ammianus the officer, his escape from Nisibis and reconnaissance into Corduene, come to occupy the foreground. Book 19 is almost entirely devoted to the siege and fall of the stronghold of Amida, from where Ammianus, one of those organizing the defence, escapes back to Antioch (chs. 1–9). In these two books of action, dramatic progression takes the place of alternation.

The latter reappears nevertheless in a more global opposition between books 18–19 on the one hand and 20–21 on the other: counterbalancing the happenings in the East developed in the former, the latter, dominated by the account of the proclamation of Julian at Lutetia (chs. 4 and 5) and of the negotiations with Constantius (chs. 8 and 9), are almost exclusively Western. Diplomatic failure leads to civil war; having made sure that his back is protected (21, 1–4), Julian crosses the eastern provinces in forced marches (chs. 5–12). In the opposite direction, Constantius' energy is broken by illness and death (chs. 14–16).

From that point onwards, the juxtaposition of the rivals Constantius

and Julian, with the latter rising as the former declines, can no longer constitute an effective principle of composition providing politically and morally meaningful symmetrical contrasts. Julian's reign, first in Constantinople and then in Antioch, fills book 22, while extraordinary emphasis is given to Eastern affairs by developing in three books (23–25) Julian's campaign, presented as the revenge for the plundering of Amida. This unit, once considered the crowning achievement of the entire work, has the structure of a tragedy, with one part ascending—Julian's successes—until the crisis—the fire destroying the fleet before Ctesiphon (24, 7)—then a gradual darkening until the catastrophe of the hero's death as victim of destiny and his own inordinate pride (25, 3).

However, taking into consideration that Julian's superiority as the ideal emperor (25, 4) had to be established by a new contrast, this time with his successors, Ammianus adds a section (bks. 26–31) in which, given the division of the Empire between the 'Pannonian brothers', the principle of alternating East and West can regain a certain vitality, even though the idea of contrast cannot be developed to the same point as between Constantius and Julian.

Book 26 is remarkably balanced between two contrasting great episodes: the elevation of Valentinian (chs. 1–4) and Procopius' rebellion against Valens (chs. 5–10). While the former emphasizes the authority of the *Augustus senior*, the latter immediately questions the abilities of his brother. Book 27 is largely dominated by the affairs of the West, most of all the successes and the victories achieved by Valentinian and his generals against the Alamanni, the Picts and the Scots (chs. 2, 8 and 10). If Valentinian is depicted as a cruel prince (ch. 7), he is also represented as a capable emperor (ch. 6), while Valens' successes against the Goths are mentioned in passing (ch. 5) between the two passages about his brother.

Book 28 deals exclusively with the West and is made up of two large units. One is negative and reports the trials for magic and high treason in Rome (ch. 1); the other, positive, covers the victories won by Valentinian and his generals (chs. 2, 3, and 5) against various barbarian peoples.[42] The wish to connect this 'supplement' firmly with the originally planned work is evident. The second 'vitriolic'

[42] The programme had been set out at 26, 4, 5–6: *Hoc tempore uelut per uniuersum orbem Romanum, bellicum canentibus bucinis, excitae gentes saeuissimae, limites sibi proximos persultabant . . . Alamanni . . . Sarmatae et Quadi . . . Picti Saxonesque et Scotti . . . Austoriani*

depiction of the vices of Senate and *plebs* (28, 4)—an echo of 14, 6, but differing from it in its *uariatio* on the satirical themes and by its more radical and generalized criticism—shows this intention to be both structural and moral.

The opening of book 29 is symmetrical with the preceding: the trials in Rome are echoed, after the story of the tripod oracle, by the trials, followed by mass executions, conducted in Antioch by Modestus with the support of Valens (chs. 1 and 2). The second strong point of this book is its long chapter 5, dealing with the difficult but victorious operations of Theodosius the Elder against the Mauritanian Firmus. The chapter is remarkable: it brings in Africa, which so far had been practically absent in the extant work,[43] and it revives the contrast East (trials of Antioch)/West (war in Africa). Its military character balances the opening account of the trials of civilians, and at the same time highlights the differences in the two emperors' preoccupations, always to the disadvantage of Valens.

The discredit repeatedly thrown on Valens is reinforced in book 30 by the indignant representation of the murder, infringing the laws of hospitality, of Pap, a king of Armenia loyal to Rome (ch. 1). Nor is Valens able to ensure order and discipline within his states. By echoing the vituperation of the habits of other orientals, courtiers and soldiers, under the rule of Constantius (22, 4), an attack against the indecent greed of Eastern advocates (ch. 4) demonstrates that the 'degenerated Pannonian' has not even attempted to re-establish a semblance of morality.[44]

The close parallels between the murder through treachery of the king of Armenia (30, 1) and that of Gabinius, king of the Quadi (29, 6) suggest that the punishments and deaths of the two brothers have the same origin. In flying into a passion against the Quadi, Valentinian collapses before them, felled by a stroke (ch. 6). The

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Mauricaeque aliae gentes . . . globi Gothorum . . . Persarum rex. Nevertheless, Valentinian allows the exactions made by the Austurians in Africa to develop (28, 6).

[43] With the exception of 28, 6 (misfortunes of Tripolitania). Twice (29, 5, 16 for Icosium and 18 for Caesarea) Ammianus refers back to earlier accounts given in a *situs Africae* (in the account of the reign of Septimius Severus?).

[44] The expression is put into the mouth of the usurper Procopius (26, 7, 16). The concluding portrait of Valens nevertheless credits him with his remarkable administration of the provinces and with measures for restricting the rapacity of prosecutors (31, 14, 2–3).

end of the book is his portrait (chs. 7–9), which will find its reflection, symmetrically,[45] in that of Valens (31, 14).

In the meantime, the latter adds to the massacre of the innocents at Antioch and the murder of Pap an even more unforgivable crime: he opens the gates of the Empire to the Goths, leaving the population of Thrace at their mercy (chs. 1–12). The collective punishment for Rome is the disaster of Adrianople (31, 13), the personal retribution for Valens his disappearance into smoke, in a fire that mimics the pyre of the philosopher Simonides.[46]

One can see that in order to achieve progression, coherence and also variety in his discourse, Ammianus has enlisted the great principles of historical composition: the contrast between East and West, between civilian and military matters, between the strengths and weaknesses, virtues and vices of the emperors. But he has also constructed a more personal, subtle and efficient system built on echoes and correspondences, some providing contrast, others a modulation of the representation. The latter, moving always in the direction of increasing darkening and pessimism, sets up a negative climax which—going from the triumph of Argentoratum to the disaster of Hadrianopolis—constitutes the descending arc of the *Res gestae*.

The Res gestae *among contemporary historical writings*

The *Res gestae* outstrip contemporary works of history in both size and ambition. The prefaces and methodological statements scattered throughout the work, wherever the historian wants to justify his method or explicate his intentions, express a concept of history that is at the same time lofty and coherent.[47] Certainly, the classical profession of truth is common to all works of history of the time. However, the rejection of details (*minutiae*), constituent elements of biography and chronicle,[48] the wish to keep to the great outlines of events (*celsitudines/summitates rerum*),[49] the acknowledgement of the

[45] The portrait of Valentinian begins with the *uitia* and ends with the *bona* (30, 8–9), while the order is inverted for that of Valens.

[46] Cf. 29, 1, 38–39 and 31, 13, 14–15.

[47] G. Sabbah, *La méthode d'Ammien Marcellin* . . ., 11–29; E. Cizek, *Histoire et historiens* . . ., 311–313.

[48] See 23, 1, 1; 23, 6, 74; 26, 1, 1; 27, 2, 11; 28, 2, 12.

[49] See 26, 1, 1; 31, 5, 10.

reader's right to *scientia/cognitio plena*[50]—which justifies the geographical, scientific and religious 'digressions'[51] as a reaction against the excessive concision of the abstracts in fashion at the time[52]—the desire to furnish documentation and to build the account on its irrefutable base in an 'apodictic' scheme:[53] all these choices trace the outlines of a 'neo-grand history', that is a serious history in the tradition of Thucydides and Polybius.[54] The realization, without contradicting these principles, also makes Ammianus part of the tradition of patriotic, moralizing and artistic history of the Romans—of Sallust, Livy and Tacitus.

While Ammianus is a continuator of Tacitus, he is neither an imitator nor his epigone. Certainly, they have strong affinities, both in their pessimist worldview and in the poeticization of history. However, pessimism is also a Sallustian trait, as are the sometimes brutal brevity and the deliberate irregularity of sentences.[55] There is little evidence for the influence of Livy in Ammianus' style,[56] but it shows itself in the moralization of history, the systematic use of *exempla*, the belief in the greatness of Rome and the valorization of both *Virtus* and *Fortuna* at the same time.[57] On the other hand, although poeticizing

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[50] See 15, 1, 1 (*nihil subtrahit cognitioni gestorum*), or rather *iustorum* according to MS *V*; 23, 6, 1 (*paulo prolixior textus ad scientiam proficiet plenam*).

[51] Knowledge about historical facts and personalities, countries (the Orient, Gaul, Egypt, the Black Sea, Persia, . . .), about natural phenomena (eclipses, earthquakes) and particular matters (the leap year, war engines, . . .). For a positive interpretation of these 'digressions', see D. den Hengst, "The scientific digressions in Ammianus' *Res gestae*", in *Cognitio gestorum* . . ., 39–46.

[52] See 23, 6, 1: *quisquis enim adfectat nimiam breuitatem ubi narrantur incognita, non quid signatius explicet sed quid debeat praeteriri scrutatur.*

[53] G. Sabbah, *La méthode* . . ., 23–24.

[54] Ibid., 91–102.

[55] In particular in one chapter (29, 5), where the imitation of Sallust is reinforced by the similar subject-matter (war in Africa against the rebel Mauritanian kings Jugurtha and Firmus respectively).

[56] Despite the periodical construction of the long sentence and the systematic use of the lengthening *ablativus absolutus*: cf. J.P. Chausserie Laprée, *L'expression narrative chez les historiens latins* (Paris, 1969), who highlights Livy's innovativeness. According to A. Debru, "La phrase narrative d'Ammien Marcellin", *RPh* 66 (1992), 267–287, Ammianus' narrative 'period', whilst developing participial constructions and 'extensions', retains the classical traits of «un instrument de narration et d'analyse façonné parts prédécesseurs et adapté á son projet».

[57] This valorization of both is made to serve the mystique of Rome at 14, 6, 3: *Tempore quo primis auspiciis in mundanum fulgorem surgeret uictura dum erunt homines Roma, ut augeretur sublimibus incrementis, foedere pacis aeternae Virtus conuenit atque Fortuna* . . . See M.A. Marié, "*Virtus* et *Fortuna* chez Ammien Marcellin: la responsabilité des dieux et des hommes dans l'abandon de Nisibe et la défaite d'Andrinople (*Res gestae* XXV, 9 et XXXI)", *REL* 67 (1989), 179–190.

is one of the major characteristics of description in Ammianus, it comes directly from Virgil himself, the *eminentissimus uates*,[58] rather than mediated through Tacitus.[59] There is also a difference in the degree of poeticizing: Ammianus goes further, to the point of excess, on the path taken by his predecessor. His most stylized passages, the descriptions of battles, are revealing.[60] In these the borders between the historical report and the evocation of the epic become blurred, so that the principal elements can be interpreted either way, realistically or symbolically and allegorically. This is true for the accounts of Argentoratum and Amida, and even more so for that about Adrianople, which is an allegory for the fate of Rome.[61]

By the height of his ambition and the wealth of his cultural references, Ammianus stood on the opposite side from the historiographical trends of his time. Nevertheless, he could not escape contact with them, at least for polemicizing against them, or even—perhaps unconsciously—their attraction. Despite the author's asserted intention, the *Res gestae* take place also in the panorama of fourth-century historiography, in which the fault-lines were not always between pagan works on the one hand and Christian works on the other.[62] In their quality of being a long and detailed history which intends to be complete, they have their equivalent only in the histories of the Church, with various differences and divarications as is known:[63]

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[58] In the preface to Julian's exploits in Gaul (15, 9, 1): *ut Mantuanus uates praedixit excelsus*, and as an opening for the invasion of the Goths (31, 4, 6): *ut eminentissimus memorat uates*.

[59] The question can be asked for 31, 7, 16, *albentes ossibus campi*, where the direct citation of *Aen.* 12, 35, *campique ingentes ossibus albent*, is more plausible than the mediation via Tacitus, *Ann.* 1, 61, *medio campi albentia ossa*. Cf. also Claud. rapt. Pros. 3, 341–342, *immaniaque ossa/serpentum passim cumulis exsanguibus albent.*

[60] See in particular N. Bitter, *Kampfschilderungen bei Ammianus Marcellinus*. Bonn, 1976.

[61] On the religious meaning and the symbolism of the elements water and fire in the account of Hadrianopolis, see G. Sabbah, *La méthode . . .*, 558–562.

[62] A. Momigliano, "Pagan and Christian historiography in the fourth century after D", in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity*, Oxford, 1963, Ch. 4; Y.M. Duval, "Les métamorphoses de l'historiographie aux IV^{e} et V^{e} siècles. Renaissance, fin ou permanence de l'Empire romain", in *Actes du VII^{e} Congrès de la FIEC* (1979), 2, Budapest, 1983, 137–182; G. Zecchini, "La storiografia cristiana latina del IV secolo (da Lattanzio ad Orosio)", in *I cristiani e l'Impero nel IV secolo* (Macerata, 1988), 169–194.

[63] Indicative of this established fact is the almost complete disappearance of the *Chronike Historia* by Eunapius (the fragments have been collected by R.C. Blockley, *FCH*, Liverpool, vol. II, 1983). Zosimus is strongly dependent on Eunapius. Nicomachus

the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius of Caesarea predates the *Res gestae* by more than sixty years,[64] while the *Histories* of Socrates and of Sozomenus are written about fifty years later. Given the distance in time in both directions, and if one considers that the *Historiae aduersus paganos* by Orosius, which are closer in time (about 417/418), and the work by Salvianus *On the Government of God* (about 445) are polemical rather than historical, as are the first five books of the *City of God* (from 413), the history of Ammianus appears as an exceptional and isolated monument.[65]

For cultural or religious reasons, the fashion and spirit of the times were in favour of brief literary forms, such as biographies, summaries and epitomes, as well as chronicles. This last genre, exemplified by Eusebius, Jerome and Sulpicius Severus, remained the prerogative of Christian authors, although its original—apologetic—objective had lost its relevance. Ammianus is at the opposite end of the scale to such endeavours and parades his contempt for chronological *minutiae*.[66] Without naming them, he censures also summaries (and epitomes), although there are numerous examples among the pagan authors of his time, such as Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Rufius Festus and the anonymous author of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*. He acknowledges only the first of these as a *scriptor historicus*,[67] as an original historian for his subject-matter and his polished style. When reporting Eutropius' prosecution on occasion of the Antioch trials,[68] Ammianus does not credit him with the same title—although he knew Eutropius' work and was possibly influenced by the end of the *Breviarium* in writing his epilogue.[69] Ammianus knew Rufius Festus and used him

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Flavianus had written *Annales* on which no more than conjecture is possible (see J. Schlumberger, "Die verlorenen Annalen des Nicomachus Flavianus: ein Werk über Geschichte der römischen Republik oder Kaiserzeit", *BHAC* 1982/1983, Bonn, 305–329). F. Paschoud, "Valentinien travesti ou de la malignité d'Ammien", in *Cognitio gestorum* . . . 1992, 67–84, sees in these *Annales* the common source of Ammianus and of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*.

[64] It stops at 324 (the death of Licinius). Nevertheless, Eusebius' *HE* is continued until 395, and therefore into Ammianus' lifetime, by Rufinus of Aquileia.

[65] Cf. A. Momigliano, "The lonely historian Ammianus Marcellinus", in *ASNP*, series III, IV, 4, 1974, 1393–1407.

[66] See 26, 5, 15; 29, 5, 1.

[67] See 21, 10, 6: *Victorem apud Sirmium uisum, scriptorem historicum* . . . *Pannoniae secundae consularem praefecit et honorauit aenea statua* . . . (Ammianus suggests that Victor's value as a historian played a part in his promotion).

[68] See 29, 1, 36.

[69] Compare Eutropius 10, 18, 3 (*reliqua stilo maiore dicenda sunt*) and Ammianus 31, 16, 9 (. . . *procudere linguas ad maiores moneo stilos*). The work by Eutropius had

for his lists of provinces and the dates of their annexation, but considered him too dishonest a person to be acknowledged as a historian.[70] However, what Ammianus criticizes sharply is the genre of the abstract itself and its scope; he considers the choice of this genre as deliberate infraction of the historian's basic obligation towards his reader, i.e. *cognitio plena*.[71]

In spite of the great varieties in their volume—from the longest and most detailed *Lives* of the *Historia Augusta* to the short mentions in Jerome's *De uiris illustribus*—biographies by Christian as well as pagan authors are all successful because of the fashion for them, but also, objectively, because of the henceforth lonely exercise of power. Ammianus' *History* is not without a strong tendency towards the biographical:[72] 'encomiastic' for Julian, more nuanced for Gallus, Constantius, and Jovianus, and decidedly critical for Valentinian and particularly Valens. The *Res gestae* and the *Historia Augusta*, doubtless contemporary works, compete for a much-coveted literary field, addressing if not the same audience, then at least audiences some of whose tastes and requests overlap.[73] Hence the polemical attitude which is keen in both works, more explicitly in the *Historia Augusta*, which ironically plagiarizes its competitor, undermining the foundations on which the latter claims to rest.[74] Anxious about "dignity",

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spread rapidly in the Greek East through the translation by Paeanios after 380 (cf. H. Droysen, in the introduction to his edition of Eutropius, *MGH* AA II, p. XXI). R.C. Blockley, "Ammianus and Cicero: the Epilogue of the History as a literary statement", *Phoenix*, 52/3–4 (1998), 305–314, plays down the significance of the similarity in expression.

[70] See 29, 2, 21–28.

[71] See 15, 1, 1: *Tunc enim est laudanda breuitas, cum moras rumpens intempestiuas nihil subtrahit cognitioni iustorum* (*iustorum*, as given by the *Fuldensis*, is better than the editors' emendation *gestorum*).

[72] Ch. Samberger, "Die 'Kaiserbiographie' in den *Res gestae* des Ammianus Marcellinus", *Klio* 52 (1969), 349–482.

[73] W. Seyfarth, "Vom Geschichtsschreiber und seinem Publikum im spätantiken Rom", *Antike Geschichtsschreibung*, Wiss. Zeitschr. d. Univ. Rostock 18 (1969), part II, fascicle 4/5, 449–455.

[74] In particular at the beginning of the *Vita Aureliani* (2, 1–2): *Scribe, inquit, ut libet. Securus quod uelis dices, habiturus mendaciorum comites quos historicae eloquentiae miramur auctores* (that is, Livy, Tacitus and Pompeius Trogus). The fundamental monograph on the subject by R. Syme, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Historia Augusta*, Cambridge, 1968, has been supplemented by several contributions published in *BHAC*. By presenting the most famous historians as the greatest liars precisely because of their literary genius, the *Historia Augusta* foreshadows the problematics of many modern critical studies.

Ammianus, on the other hand, proceeds more discreetly by repeating firmly his profession of an integral truth (*fides integra rerum*),[75] expressing (in the preface of book 26) his rejection of details (*minutiae*),[76] and by reproving as contrary to the ideal of a wide-ranging culture expected from aristocrats the exclusive preference held by the *nobiles* for Marius Maximus, the biographer of the age of Severus often cited by the *Historia Augusta*.[77] At times, however, the two authors find themselves in a shared position, in particular for the place and rôle of detail: from reading so many anecdotes and so many 'sayings' in Ammianus, one can notice that silently he adopts the position asserted openly by the rival work.[78]

His aspirations to 'grand history' do not prevent him, occasionally, from coming close to two sub-genres of biography, namely hagiography and autobiography. In the chapters dedicated to Julian's ascetic virtues, the *Res gestae* have points of contact with Jerome's three *Lives of Saints* or the *Vita Martini* by Sulpicius Severus, plainly contemporary writings, as well as in the Greek sphere with which Ammianus would also have been familiar, with later the *Lives of the Desert's Fathers* or the *Historia Lausiaca*: Julian is of a frugality bordering on fasting, reduces his hours of sleep for the benefit of reading and meditation, just as a monk dedicates his nights to vigils and prayer,[79] keeps a *castitas* perceived as complete sexual abstinence, and has dreams and visitations as hermits do.[80] These were matters of rivalry and dispute between pagans and Christians: neither of the two parties would cede to the other the monopoly of asceticism and

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[75] See 16, 1, 3: *Quicquid autem narrabitur, quod non falsitas concinnat, sed fides integra rerum absoluit* . . . (introducing Julian's exploits in Gaul).

[76] See 26, 1, 1: *si praeteritum sit quod locutus est imperator in cena . . . et similia plurima, praeceptis historiae dissonantia, discurrere per negotiorum celsitudines adsuetae, non humilium minutias indagare causarum . . .*

[77] See 28, 4, 14: *quidam detestantes ut uenena doctrinas, Iuuenalem et Marium Maximum curatiore studio legunt . . .*

[78] *HA*, *Macr.* 1, 5: *cum omnino rerum uilium aut nulla scribenda sint aut nimis pauca, si tamen ex his mores possint animaduerti, qui re uera sciendi sunt, . . . sed ex parte, ut ex ea cetera colligantur.*

[79] See 16, 5, 1–8: *Primum igitur factuque difficile, temperantiam ipse sibi indixit . . .* 4. *Hinc contingebat ut noctes ad officia diuideret tripertita, quietis et rei publicae et Musarum . . .* 5. *Iulianus uero absque instrumento quotiens uoluit euigilauit et nocte dimidiata semper exsurgens . . .* 8. *Et haec quidem pudicitiae uirtutumque sunt signa nocturna.*

[80] A vision of the *Genius publicus* the night before his elevation in Lutetia (20, 5, 10), and a vision of the same *Genius* walking away sadly from his tent the night before his death (25, 2, 3).

'renunciation of the flesh',[81] neither on the moral level nor in literary representation. In that sense, the life of Julian could be said to be a continuation of the *Life* of Apollonius of Tyana, the pagan rival of Christ.[82]

The field of autobiography is also well stacked at the end of the fourth century; never before in antiquity had people written so much about themselves in the first person. In the autobiographical passages, Ammianus' voice becomes part, in the historical/novelistic mode, of a chorus of voices—pagan, like those of Libanius or Julian,[83] or Christian such as Augustine's—keen to tell their story in order to justify themselves. Personal apologia features very strongly both in the sophist considering himself misunderstood and persecuted and in the bishop whose adversaries never cease to reproach him with his Manichaean past; it is present in Ammianus, too, whose first-person account constantly aims to show that he was right to remain faithful to Ursicinus, an ambitious traitor to some, and incapable as well as responsible for the defeat to others; right to escape from Amida, when his comrades were being massacred or deported to Persia; right to believe that Julian was capable of renewing the Empire, and therefore right in accompanying him on the Persian campaign, castigated as madness by many after its final failure; and he was right to leave Antioch and the East for Rome and the West. This proof, or rather this continuous effort to persuade was certainly directed at the public, but first of all at his own conscience. Just as true autobiographies are never memoirs intended to provide material for 'real' historiographers,[84] Ammianus' history—in the books where he uses 'I', but also in others in which he is speaking less directly but perhaps even more intently about himself—is the assertion of his faithfulness to himself and of a brave (and occasionally touching) willingness to assume total responsibility for his choices.

In order to outline the literary universe in which Ammianus' work is situated within its time, it is necessary to mention two more parahis-

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[81] See P. Brown, *The Body and Society. Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1988).

[82] Translated from Philostratus by Nicomachus Flavianus at the same time.

[83] The *Autobiography* of Libanius, but also several very personal writings by Julian himself, such as the *Misopogon*.

[84] Doubtless this was the only ambition behind the memoirs of Seleucus, Callistus, Philagrius, Magnus of Carrhae and Eutychianus of Cappadocia for the Persian campaign.

torical genres much used in the fourth century, namely panegyrics and letters. The panegyric holds the first place in the imperial liturgies, reaching from the ruler's accession to his death. Ammianus could not escape its influence when evoking the *gesta* of Julian, his virtues, his superiority over the contemporary emperors, and the concentration in his person of the merits of Titus, Trajan, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius.[85] This omnipresent genre of the 'royal discourse', as illustrated by Libanius, Themistius, Mamertinus, Pacatus, Symmachus and somewhat later Claudian, exerted a dual influence, both of attraction and of repulsion, on the progressive construction of the whole of Ammianus' discourse, beyond even the 'quasi-panegyric' of Julian.[86] The influence is visible also in the chapter dealing with Constantius' entry into Rome and his stay there (16, 10). The splendid description of the *aduentus* and of the encounter, marked by mutual respect, between the emperor's majesty and that of the City relies on the panegyric and its traditional themes and ways of expression. However, the ironical round-off of the chapter is the energetic denial set by a historian against the pretentions of an emperor of his own time, Theodosius, and against his panegyrist, Pacatus.[87] Letters were also a part of the literary environment and, on a more concrete level, constituted a source of information—not so much the mundane and moral letters by the likes of Libanius and Symmachus, as the *laureatae litterae* of the emperors, and in particular the historical letters and those serving as pamphlets or apologias of which Julian provided the richest examples, his *Letter to the Senate and People of Athens* being the most widely known and the only one to survive.

Let us not be mistaken about the exact meaning of the clever but elliptic description "lonely historian" that A. Momigliano applies to Ammianus.[88] The historiographer's work was constructed at the same time as, and with full knowledge of, the genres, sub-genres as well as of the contemporary historical and parahistorical trends, between

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[85] See 16, 1, 4: *namque incrementis uelocibus ita domi forisque conluxit ut prudentia Vespasiani filius Titus alter aestimaretur, bellorum gloriosis cursibus Traiani simillimus, clemens ut Antoninus, rectae perfectaeque rationis indagine congruens Marco . . .*

[86] G. Sabbah, *La méthode . . .*, 321–346 and 348–366.

[87] See 16, 10, 15–16. The Persian prince Hormisdas is Ammianus' mouthpiece (G. Sabbah, *La méthode . . .*, 329–332).

[88] From a historiographical point of view (method, volume, style, etc.), the *Res gestae* certainly are an exceptional and isolated monument.

which it plots its original path. Situated in their literary midst, the *Res gestae* are neither a synthesis or a selection of pre-existing elements nor the juxtaposition of elements or trends dependent on history, the epitome, the biography, the panegyric and the pamphlet. They are the fusion of these elements by a mind capable of transcending their limits and borders without becoming incoherent. Ammianus embodies the different registers in a tightly written text, in which he gathers together, reinforcing the one by the other, realistic personal detail taken from life and preserved in all its most immediate freshness and his idea or thesis, that is, his wider view of the destiny of Rome. In an environment dominated by a type of history in which the truth is an object of dispute between two camps as well as within each of them, Ammianus chose to go against the stream and attempt an escape as he did at Amida: an escape upwards by means of 'grand history'.

Ammianus and Christianity: the priority of the historiographical choice

Ammianus intends himself as a historian. It is therefore difficult to intercept the intimate convictions of Ammianus the man, especially when it comes to religious matters, from the representation—subjected to the conditions of objectivity—given by Ammianus the historiographer. As a result, the question of Ammianus' attitude towards Christianity gives rise to highly contrasting conclusions. There is no longer anyone who believes that the Antiochian was a Christian, nor that he had a true liking for the new religion. However, this leaves a large choice between a more or less benevolent neutrality, disdain, contempt and a declared and militant hostility.[89] The text is examined in what it says explicitly, in what it appears to suggest by cryptic words and even in its silences, which are taken as deliberate and insidious. The conclusion drawn depends on the passages taken into account and the relative importance attributed to them. Now, there is a danger of looking in the *Res gestae* for what one believes to know already from elsewhere about dissensions, rivalries and religious struggles during that period. It would be too simplistic to apply the terms

[89] From Cl. Chifflet to T.G. Elliott.
[90] A. Momigliano, *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity* (Oxford, 1963).

'struggle' or 'conflict'[90] to the coexistence between pagans and Christians, which consisted in relatively peaceful competition, with the exception of short spurts of high tension, such as the reign of Julian from 362 to 363 and the 'pagan reaction' of 392–394. In fact, the dividing line went right through families even, from the most aristocratic to the most common, one of them being the family of Augustine. Influences went both ways: Christian families gave their children a classical education, and Christian values inspired the laws and thus had repercussions on everyone's morals. One must therefore not a priori attribute to Ammianus subversive intentions against the Christian Empire, as this would bring down his genuine work of history to the level of a pamphlet,[91] and a more elaborate, and therefore more treacherous one, than the others at that. Let us rather consider the principal passages in which he speaks explicitly about Christianity and about Christians *qua* Christians as seen in their relations with interior and external politics.

The account of the disturbances caused by the arrest of the bishop of Rome, Liberius (15, 7, 6–10), does not so much represent his followers as troublemakers as it denounces the authoritarianism of Constantius, his "caesaropapism" as a factor of confusion in a religion that in itself was *absoluta et simplex*.[92] The episode of Julian calling back all the bishops deposited and banned by Constantius is presented in all its ambiguity: is it a means of religious appeasement or an attempt to fan the quarrels and hatreds between Christians?[93] Here it is Julian's religious policy that is discussed rather than the Christians as such. It is even censured as sectarian twice, on the occasion of the law for schools that *de facto* banned Christian teachers from teaching.[94] Julian also acted too fast in blaming the 'Galileans' for the fire at the temple of Apollo at Daphne.[95] It is true that Ammianus reproves the bloody troubles provoked in Rome by the

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[91] Such as *Homilies* 4 and 5 by Gregory of Nazianzus, the *Carmen aduersus paganos*, the *Contra Romanum senatorem* and the invective *Against Symmachus* by Prudentius.

[92] See 21, 16, 18. For an in-depth analysis of this phrase, see V. Neri, "Ammianus' definition of Christianity as *absoluta et simplex religio*", in *Cognitio gestorum* . . ., 59–65.

[93] See 22, 5, 3–4. Does Ammianus agree with Julian's 'saying' *nullas infestas hominibus bestias, ut sibi feralibus plerique Christianorum*? Even so, he would be alluding only at internal dissensions among Christians.

[94] See 22, 10, 7 (*inclemens, obruendum perenni silentio*) and 25, 4, 20 (*inclemens*).

[95] See 22, 13, 2–3: *Suspicabatur* . . . *id Christianos egisse* . . . *Ferebatur autem licet rumore leuissimo, hac ex causa conflagrasse delubrum quod Asclepiades philosophus* . . .

[96] See 27, 3, 12–13. Cf. V. Neri, *Ammiano e il cristianesimo* . . . 1985, 191–228.

respective followers of Damasius and Ursinus.[96] However, in a concern for balance and fairness, he follows up his ironical tirade against Roman prelates parading in state chariots sumptuously dressed and gathering gifts from rich matrons with praise—rare for such a demanding moralist—of the frugal simplicity and sincere faith of provincial bishops.[97] It seems therefore that clear-cut conclusions are out of place. It is true that the Christians, as a group, are sometimes represented as being the originators of troubles or disorder. On the other hand, it is not their religion as such that is blamed, but rather the abuse of it by bigoted or authoritarian princes or by ambitious men stirring up intrigues.[98]

Regarding the contacts of Christians with the outside, Ammianus mentions several times Christian bishops or priests serving as intermediaries in critical moments between the Romans and their Persian or Goth enemies.[99] Is this rôle objectively justified by their talents as negotiators based on moral authority and on the prestige of their position, or again by humanitarian intentions which led them to step forward spontaneously? This is not, or at least not always, what Ammianus hints at: for example, the bishop of Bezabde fails in his peace mission, but as soon as he leaves, the Persians concentrate their attacks on the weak parts of the ramparts; the insinuation is obvious.[100] The other occurrences are less clear-cut: just before the battle of Adrianople and during the siege of Constantinople, Christian priests are sent by the Goths.[101] Their mission remains without result, but the Christians appear, if not as traitors, then at least as having political as well as religious connections with the enemy.

Need one take into account here the unfavourable judgement of *nouator turbatorque priscarum legum*[102] pronounced against Constantine,

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[97] See 27, 3, 15.

[98] For example bishop George of Alexandria, who was killed by a mob in Alexandria (22, 11) once the death of his protector Constantius became known. However, the reproofs directed against this opponent of Athanasius by church historians show that Ammianus is correct in writing that George was hated "indiscriminately by all" (22, 11, 10).

[99] See 20, 7, 7–9 (*Perstrinxit tamen suspicio uana quaedam episcopum, ut opinor, licet adseueratione uulgata multorum . . .*) and 31, 12, 8–9 (a Christian priest sent by Fritigern with an official mission and a secret letter); 31, 15, 6.

[100] L. Angliviel de la Beaumelle, "Remarques sur l'attitude d'Ammien Marcellin à l'égard du christianisme", in *Mélanges W. Seston* (Paris, 1974), 15–23.

[101] See 31, 12, 8–9 and 31, 15, 6.

[102] See 21, 10, 8. However, this verdict, pronounced by Julian with polemic intent, is accompanied by a remark directed against Julian himself: by making a

who is presented also as responsible, by his greed and naïvety, for the opening of hostilities against the Persians,[103] as well as the severe and often even satirical depiction of Constantius, a necessary counterweight to the praise of Julian?[104] The glorification of the latter and the condemnation of the others cannot be explained by exclusively, or even mainly, religious reasons.[105] They are judged according to political and military criteria, according to the public interest. In religious matters, the strict neutrality and non-intervention of the Nicean Christian Valentinian, which guarantees freedom of conscience, is approved of unreservedly, not without a critical jibe against the authoritarian politics and prosecutions of his successor Theodosius.[106]

The critical portraits of Probus, the head of the powerful Christian family of the Anicii, and of the duke of Armenia, Terentius, are not reduced to caricatures of hypocritically pious Christians.[107] Nor, on the other hand, is the noble part played by the king of Armenia, Pap, a riposte to his diabolization by the Christians.[108] The attitude of Ammianus appears measured, anxious to establish the necessary distinctions and not to condemn *en bloc*, but rather to separate the *religio absoluta et simplex* from the *anilis superstitio*, and the ostentation of the Roman bishops from the pure simplicity of their provincial colleagues. Nothing allows us to interpret the second term of his self-portrait—*ut miles quondam et Graecus*—as a declaration of allegiance to

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crude and cruel barbarian like Nevitta a consul he does worse a thing than Constantine.

[103] See 25, 4, 23: *sciant . . . non Iulianum, sed Constantinum ardores Parthicos succendisse, dum Metrodori mendaciis auidius adquiescit.*

[104] Less so in the relatively balanced final portrait (21, 16) than in the ironical representation of his intentions, his attitude and his character at 16, 10, the hypocrisy that his speech against Julian is thought to exsude (21, 13, 10–15), and in the traits emphasizing his submissiveness towards his eunuchs and his spouses (18, 4, 3 and 21, 16, 16).

[105] Julian's religious sectarianism to the detriment of Christian teachers is condemned (22, 10, 7); if Constantius has an 'old wife's superstition' (21, 16, 18), in Julian there is also *superstitio* in the abuse of sacrifices (22, 12, 6), not to mention the disgraceful promiscuity of the *mulierculae* in the processions (22, 14, 3).

[106] See 30, 9, 5: *hoc moderamine principatus inclaruit quod inter religionum diuersitates medius stetit nec quemquam inquietauit neque ut hoc coleretur imperauit aut illud . . .*

[107] See 27, 11, 5 (*subamarum arridens*) and 30, 1, 2 (*demisse ambulans semperque submaestus*).

[108] Having had the *katholikos* Narses executed, he is represented as being possessed by demons by the Christians, whose opinion we find expressed in the Armenian historians Faustus of Buzanta, Moses of Khoren and Lazarus of Pharbe. See R. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie des origines à 1071* (Paris, 1947), and R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus . . .* (Brussels, 1975), coll. Latomus, vol. 141, 62–72.

the Hellenic religion or the 'cult of the gods'. Such an interpretation of the final declaration[109] is incompatible with the attitude Ammianus displays throughout the *Res gestae*. It would spoil the proud profession of truth which follows the self-portrait.

What restricts the presence, and shapes the representation, of Christianity and the Christians is not the author's religious conviction, but his chosen historical perspective—even though this historical perspective itself has been determined by a number of factors. Religion, which was then strongly connected with politics, features among those, but mainly they are cultural and literary. This perspective alone, without the intervention of religious polemics, accounts for the limited space, out of proportion with the importance Christianity had in private *and* public life, that Ammianus has reserved for the new religion. His concept of 'grand history' in the classical sense, restricted to important events and facts, military as well as political, led him quite naturally to reduce the part of history that we would call religious. Moreover, his criteria were no less strict where pagan religion was concerned. He mentions only, in order to remain within the tradition of Livy and of the annalists, the *prodigia* and *omina*,[110] and he allots a minimal part to religion when he cannot avoid talking about it in his account about Julian: despite the central place it had in the latter's politics, mentions of religion are restricted to occasional legal dispositions, sacrifices, oracles and ceremonies.[111] The final portrait confirms that Julian was not for him the head of a pagan Church or a religious fanatic, but a great soldier and a philosopher-prince.[112]

A historian's choice of details can always be explained by their function for the overall project, and Christian historiography provides further proof. Its specific nature is asserted in the preface to the *Ecclesiastic History* of Eusebius of Caesarea, which lists the seven points that will constitute its subject-matter exclusively.[113] Every type

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[109] Which is, however, upheld by I. Stoian, "A propos de la conception historique d'Ammien Marcellin (*ut miles quondam et Graecus*)", *Latomus* 26 (1967), 73–81, and taken up by T.G. Elliott, *Ammianus Marcellinus* . . . (in particular pp. 202–221), and by T.D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation* . . ., 78f.

[110] Before the outbreak of the hostilities started by Julian in Persia (23, 1, 5–7 and 23, 5, 4–14) and announcing the Gothic catastrophe (31, 1).

[111] For example, the morning sacrifice to Jupiter on Mount Casios (22, 14, 4).

[112] Cf. J. Fontaine, "Le Julien d'Ammien Marcellin", in P. Richer, R. Braun (eds.), *L'empereur Julien. De l'histoire à la légende* (Paris, 1978), 31–65.

[113] Eus., *HE* 1, 1, 1–2 (the succession of the Apostles, great things achieved

of history has its subject, or its 'intrigue'. Classical 'grand history' needs political or military subjects, the history of the Empire, with only rare incursions into the religious. Ecclesiastic history, on the other hand, reduces political or military facts and events to strictly necessary information.[114] The comparison of the history of Julian as told in the *Res gestae* and the *Ecclesiastic Histories* of Socrates and Sozomenus is enlightening. Ammianus relates his military and political feats and exploits, envisaging him always and solely as Caesar and then emperor. Sozomenus and Socrates see him only as the Apostate and the persecutor; Argentoratum is a minor success, a simple pretext for usurpation; the Persian campaign is an act of madness that fits into the plan of Providence; the Apostate's failure and death are the punishment intended by Christ.

Ammian has no more written an anti-Christian pamphlet than he has written the history of the pagan church dreamt of by Julian. On the contrary, the *Res gestae* are the last antique illustration of a secular, non-clerical history[115]—at least, the last in the Latin sphere. In the Eastern, proto-Byzantine world, literary conservatism still lived on in the 5th and 6th centuries, well after Eunapius, in the 'classicizing' historians Olympiodorus, Priscus, Procopius, Agathias and Zosimus. Doubtless, the choice between traditional secular history and innovative ecclesiastic history depends not so much on the political and religious situation (proto-Byzantine society was already strongly Christianized and even clericalized), or even on each historian's own option, as on the permanence or weakening of cultural tradition. The latter remained alive and strong for longer in the Greek sphere, because its roots went deeper there. It is noteworthy that the last exponent of that strong cultural tradition in the Latin world was of Greek origin. Perhaps that is the meaning, or one of the meanings, of the famous final *et Graecus*: Ammianus was conscious of the fact that, at its roots, his historiographical choice was part of a Greek

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throughout church history, the figures who have been at the head of the most illustrious dioceses, the writers and orators spreading the word of God, the heretics, the misfortunes of the Jews, the persecutions and the martyrs and the actual testimonies of divine benevolence).

[114] Even though, with the successors of Eusebius such as Sozomenus, the *HE* increasingly uses secular history as its framework, which provides it with a chronology and unity not to be found in the succession of bishops in the various episcopal sees.

[115] Neither the *Getica* by Jordanes nor the Anonymus of Valois attain a historiographical level that could moderate this opinion.

tradition which at the same time had older credentials and still had a longer future before it.[116]

From morals to aesthetics

Ammianus' morals have been the subject of numerous studies.[117] Quite rightly so, since the *Res gestae* claim openly to assume the function of *magistra uitae* assigned to history by Cicero. In several passages, the historian turns moralist and abandons his objective tone for the ringing tones of a procurator or a strict judge. Often his verdict is supported by the *sententiae* of great authorities of the past[118] or by anecdotes with an ethical message and the citation of edifying 'sayings' attributed to heroes and great men of the past.[119] The recall to order of such-and-such figure, including emperors, deviating from the moral norm is often made by extending the phrase and referring to an ancient or eternally valid rule.[120] Also, *ius, iustitia, aequitas* and *fides* are among the most frequently recurring words in the *Res gestae*. The classical contrast between *domi* and *militiae*, between peace and war, fades in favour of the contrast justice/injus-

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[116] A. Cameron, "The Latin revival of the fourth century", in W. Treadgold (ed.), *Renaissance before the Renaissance. Cultural Revivals of late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Stanford, 1984), 42–58.

[117] For example, after W. Ensslin, P.M. Camus, *Ammien Marcellin* . . ., 103–129, and R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus* . . ., 157–167.

[118] Theognis (29, 1, 21); Simonides (14, 6, 7 and 16, 5, 8); Bacchylides (25, 4, 3); Plato (16, 5, 10; 22, 16, 22; 23, 6, 32; 25, 4, 2; 30, 4, 3 and 5); Demosthenes (30, 1, 23); Isocrates (30, 8, 6); Aristotle (18, 3, 7); Cato (14, 6, 8; 15, 12, 4; 16, 5, 2); Cicero (14, 2, 2; 15, 12, 4; 16, 1, 5; 19, 12, 18; 21, 1, 14; 21, 16, 13; 22, 7, 3; 26, 10, 12; 27, 9, 10; 27, 11, 4; 28, 1, 40; 28, 4, 26; 29, 5, 24; 30, 4, 7; 30, 4, 10; 30, 8, 7).

[119] Themistocles (30, 8, 8); Socrates (28, 4, 15); Artaxerxes (30, 8, 4); Alexander (14, 11, 22; 24, 4, 27; 25, 4, 15); Papirius Cursor (30, 8, 5); Fabricius Luscinus (30, 1, 22); Scipio Africanus (24, 4, 27); Scipio Aemilianus (24, 2, 16–17); Caesar (16, 10, 3: *alium* . . . *lenunculo se commisisse piscantis*).

[120] This extension is often introduced by participles such as *oblitus* (30, 8, 2), *dissimulans scire* (30, 8, 8), *ignorans* in particular (14, 6, 10; 14, 11, 22; 16, 10, 3; 18, 3, 7; 26, 8, 13; 30, 1, 23; 30, 8, 6), or by adversative expressions (*cum* + subjunctive . . .). The targets of these are the nobles unworthy of their ancestors (14, 6, 10) or without culture (28, 4, 14–15), the *obtrectatores maleuoli* attacking Julian (25, 4, 23) or Theodosius the Elder (29, 5, 23), the *adulatores* (30, 1, 23), and the emperors Valentinian (30, 8, 6: *Valentinianus ignorans* . . ., and 8: *dissimulans scire* . . .) and Valens (29, 2, 18: *si Valenti scire per te licuisset* . . .). See A. Debru, "La phrase narrative d'Ammien Marcellin", *RPh*, 66, 2, 1992, 286, who cites *memor* (*immemor*), *imitatus* (*similis*), *nesciens* (*ignorans*).

tice and, carried along by his conviction which is 'amplified' even more by the *recitatio*, the historian turns preacher. In his way, Ammianus takes his place in the great, mainly Christian, current of preaching which, however, in his century transcends the artificial border between 'Christian genres' and 'pagan' or traditional genres.[121]

Ammianus' morality has little to do with that of a philosopher. He is, of course, not entirely a stranger to philosophy: the chapter on divination and the development on the nature of the "genius that has received us as his share" show at least some, direct or indirect, contact with classical and neo-Platonist philosophy.[122] Although the philosophical term *humanitas*, the equivalent of Themistius' key word *philanthropia*,[123] is relatively rare in Ammianus, the framework chosen for the final portrait of Julian shows that the philosophical division—the four cardinal or intrinsic virtues and the secondary or extrinsic virtues—seemed pertinent to him for a prince who as it happened wanted to be a philosopher.[124]

However, basically his morals are those of a soldier, and his scale of virtues that of a State servant. In a perhaps anachronistically republican view, for him the emperor is not the master but the first servant of the state. In the Hellenistic tradition taken on by Rome, his mission and justification are to 'save' his subjects, and that is *all* his subjects. Hence the reproving of cruelty based on ignorance, of

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[121] The disclaiming of this border is a methodological prerequisite, according to J. Fontaine, "Unité et diversité . . .", 432.

[122] See 21, 1, 7–14 and 21, 14, 4–5. Cf. the commentaries by J. Szidat, *Historischer Kommentar* . . ., 71–84, which sees the inspiration of the chapter as purely neo-Platonist, and by J. den Boeft, D. den Hengst and H.C. Teitler, *Philological and Historical Commentary* . . ., 1991, 13–23, who believe rather in the simultaneous presence of Stoicism and neo-Platonism. T.D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation* . . ., 75–77, considers it probable that Ammianus had read at least the treatise by Plotinus about the problem. For J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire* . . ., 546, n. 16, Ammianus did not have direct knowledge of neo-Platonist sources such as Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*.

[123] Only 15 relevant occurrences of *humanitas* (some of which are closer to the meanings 'politeness, *savoir-vivre*, goodness' than to the philosophical meaning 'love of humanity'): 14, 1, 8; 14, 6, 21; 14, 10, 15; 18, 10, 4; 21, 13, 10; 25, 8, 1; 27, 6, 9; 27, 12, 9; 28, 4, 1; 28, 4, 10; 29, 1, 8; 29, 1, 19; 29, 2, 6; 29, 6, 5; 30, 8, 4; 31, 4, 12; 31, 5, 7. Themistius was the prestigious addressee of a letter outlining his programme by Julian, but while the former's philosophy was based on *philanthropia*, the latter's was based on justice.

[124] See 25, 4, 1: *Cum enim sint, ut sapientes definiunt, uirtutes quattuor praecipuae, temperantia, prudentia, iustitia, fortitudo eisque accedentes extrinsecus aliae, scientia rei militaris, auctoritas, felicitas atque liberalitas* . . .

injustice,[125] greed, favouritism and weakness towards the mighty, as well as symmetrically, praise of justice supported by culture—the worst crime is the burning of books concerned with the liberal arts[126]—and even more of clemency and of an administration careful not to oppress its subjects, especially the humble and the poor. At the summit is military courage, *uirtus*, not so much the kind of heroism that leads to great exploits (but more often to excesses that endanger the Prince's life and general safety—this is Julian's greatest default), but rather valour framed by the *prudentia* and *temperantia* of a *dux cautus*,[127] who is careful to spare his soldiers. These are precisely the criteria according to which the evaluating portraits of the emperors are drawn up.

These morals are reminiscent of the leading mottoes on coins of the time: *fides militum, fides exercituum*. The soldiers' *fides* needs to be echoed by that of their leaders, most of all the first among them. Constantius fell short of this obligation in allowing those besieged at Amida to be massacred or deported. Valens and Valentinian broke their word given to allies, such as the king of Armenia,[128] or even to barbarians who had committed no crimes against Rome, such as the king of the Quadi.[129] However, at times the lapse from *fides* is justified by a higher interest, by reason of State: this is the case for the massacre of the Saxons, who had been guaranteed safe conduct and the return to their country,[130] as well as for that of the Goths,

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[125] Ammianus censures sharply the cruelty and injustice of the trials for *lèse-majesté* and magic (19, 12; 28, 1; 29, 1–2), not without observing certain distinctions according to the dignity of the accused and in particular the gravity and nature of the crimes or offences: see H. Funke, "Majestäts- und Magieprozesse bei Ammianus Marcellinus", *Jahrbuch f. Antike und Christentum*, 10 (1967), 145– 175; R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus* . . ., 104–122 and 137–156; J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire* . . ., 204–228; Th. Zawadzki, "Les procès politiques de l'an 371/372 (Amm. Marc. XXIX, 1, 29–33; Eunapius, *Vitae Soph.* VII, 6, 3–4; D 480)", in *Labor omnibus unus*, *Mélanges G. Walser* (Stuttgart, 1989), 274–286.

[126] See 29, 1, 41 (book-burnings ordered by the authorities) and 29, 2, 4 (spontaneous book-burnings, caused by fear).

[127] At Argentoratum (16, 12, 29), Julian is said to be *cautior sui* (the MS spelling unnecessarily emended). Theodosius the Elder behaves in Africa *ut pugnator cautus et prudens* (29, 5, 39). The general Frigeridus is *cautus et diligens* (31, 10, 22), *regendi conseruandique militis non ignarus* (31, 9, 2).

[128] See 30, 1, 22: *hocque figmento nefarie decepta credulitate, inter epulas quae reuerendae sunt uel in Euxino Ponto hospitali numine contuente . . . Ingemiscat . . . huius adrogantiam facti Fabricius ille Luscinus . . .*

[129] See 29, 6, 5–6: *quem digredientem post epulas, hospitalis officii sanctitate nefarie uiolata, trucidari securum effecit. Cuius rei tam atrocis disseminatus rumor . . .*

[130] See 28, 5, 4–7, with its concluding comment: *ac licet iustus quidam arbiter rerum*

who were in all likelihood innocent, by the "efficient action" of Julius.[131] Here the soldier's harsh realism acknowledges the necessity of *perfidia*—certainly saddening, but taken on serenely.

The political morals recommended for regulating the emperor's relations with his subjects and those of the Empire with the outside, the Persians and especially the barbarians, have been studied repeatedly.[132] What we will point out is merely that Ammianus' awareness of the barbarian threat and the call for the mobilization of energies to respond to it, whilst being fundamental traits of his patriotic ideology, do not imply a primary anti-Germanism and do not preclude understanding or even fellow feelings for those who are inhumanely treated.[133] His ethics in the private sphere, on the other hand, have no doubt been less investigated. Unjustly so, since there one finds points of contact that are at first sight surprising and, despite the divergences, equally strong concordances with Christian ethics. In spite of the two brief pagan reactions, the impact of which must not be overestimated, Christian ethics holds its ground, has the force of law and makes the laws, but at the same time, where a number of important values is concerned, it is a continuation of ancient universalist philosophies, which are concerned about respecting the human being.[134]

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factum incusabit perfidum et deforme, pensato tamen negotio non feret indigne manum latronum exitialem tandem data copia consumptam.

[131] See 31, 16, 8.

[132] See F. Paschoud, *Roma aeterna* (Neuchatel, 1967), 20–46, 56–59; R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus* . . ., 30–54, 73–103, 137–156; and in particular J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire* . . . 231–376.

[133] Ammianus regrets that the military commanders are rarely of Roman blood (31, 16, 8), but he recognizes the military qualities of loyal commanders of German origin, such as Frigeridus (31, 9, 2: *regendi conseruandique militis non ignarus*, 31, 10, 21: *multa atque utilia pro securitate communi sollertissime cogitanti* and 22: *dux cautus et diligens*) and Richomer (31, 12, 15: *se sponte obtulit propria ireque promiserat libens pulchrumque hoc quoque facinus et uiro conuenire existimans forti* and 17: *alacritas Richomeris*). He points out the loyalty of Macrianus, once he has been rallied (30, 3, 6: *dedit postea ad usque uitae tempus extremum constantis in concordiam animi facinorum documentum pulchrorum*). He does not hide the problems raised by the *fides* of commanders of barbarian origin sent to fight their compatriots (14, 10, 7–8). However, concerning the plot hatched against the Frank Silvanus, who was innocent, by the court of Constantius (15, 5), he makes Malarich express the justified rancour of commanders who were capable and devoted to the Empire, yet envied and betrayed (15, 5, 6). He denounces the unfair dealings of which the Goths, as yet innocent, were victims at the hands of corrupted Roman commanders (31, 4, 10–11).

[134] In particular the middle Stoicism of Panaetius, transmitted by Cicero and Seneca.

In this field, Ammianus expresses his position mainly through grand diatribes (14, 6 and 28, 4) "against the vices of the Senate and of the *plebs* of Rome".[135] One would be mistaken to see these as *excursus* for purely literary purposes, for the mere aim of *delectare*, targetting an audience doting on Juvenal. Nor are these 'sallies' the sour grapes of personal frustrations and disappointments, or a desire to settle the score with those in the West, just as he does, at 30, 4, with certain Easterners. These splendid pieces are not mere ornaments plated on the historical framework. While censuring the vices of the time, they express the most intimate convictions of Ammianus the man in matters of personal and private ethics.

The three satires are structurally detached from the account, but closely connected to their moral signification—for Ammianus as for Sallust, present-day ills can be explained by the moral decline of the *nobiles*—but one can add to these chapter 4 of book 22, which is more integrated into the text and therefore less easily pin-pointed. Its opening describes, in narrative continuity, the first measures taken by Julian, dismissing unnecessary personnel, such as eunuchs, barbers and cooks, parasites at the court of Constantius. However, the central, and most personal, part extends into an indictment against the "entirely dissolute life" (*fluxior uita*), "the gluttony and the bottomless abysses of the banquets" (*ingluuies et gurgites conuiuiorum*) of society in general,[136] before denouncing what is most ignominious, "the scandals of military life",[137] including the use of "cups heavier than swords" and "the most expert knowledge of the varieties of gold and precious stones".[138]

This passage harmonizes in a way that is unexpected with the long speech full of satirical verve that Ambrose of Milan has placed at the centre of *De Helia et ieiunio*, a Lent sermon given the evening before Easter.[139] By means of an extraordinarily off-hand transition, Ambrose moves on abruptly from praise for fasting and for the prophet Elias to the damages of gluttony in his own time.[140] As

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[135] A. Demandt, *Zeitkritik und Geschichtsbild im Werk Ammians* (Bonn, 1965).

[136] See 22, 4, 4–5: *Vnde fluxioris uitae initia . . . et pro uictorialibus epulares triumphi . . .*

[137] See 22, 4, 6–7: *Quibus tam maculosis accessere flagitia disciplinae castrensis.*

[138] See 22, 4, 6: *grauiora gladiis pocula*, and 7: *auri et lapillorum uarietates discerneret scientissime.*

[139] Between 386 and 391. Cf. M. Ihm, *Studia ambrosiana* (Leipzig, 1889), and J.R. Palanque, *Saint Ambroise et l'Empire romain* (Paris, 1933), 527–528.

[140] Ambr. *Hel.* 12, 41 CSEL 32, 2 *Sed quid hoc est? Dum de ieiunio disputo, strepitus*

Ammianus does at 22, 4, he flares up first against the ravages of *gula* and *ebrietas* in society in general, "among the vulgar and most futile men"[141] (the *plebs* reviled by Ammianus at 14, 6, 25–26 and 28, 4, 28–34), and then chooses for his main target the same vices among "the powerful and the most valorous".[142] The preacher then rails against drinking bouts[143] and the lamentable state to which these battles, fought with enormous bowls of wine that was drunk and then vomited, reduced these sad 'heroes' who would blush to admit defeat.[144] This vituperation is all the more cutting as it is addressed to a very official audience, containing the highest military ranks, in the Great Basilica of Milan.[145] Several textual affinities[146] and the attraction exerted by ancient Roman comical writers on both the historian and the bishop reinforce the parallelism.[147]

Nevertheless, nothing proves that one knew or imitated the other. Ambrose first of all follows very closely homilies 1 and 2 by Basil

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audio conuiuiorum. Nisi fallor, in sermone meo redoluit prandium. ("But what is this? While I preach about fasting, I hear the noises of banquets. Unless I am mistaken, the smell of lunch has spread in my sermon.")

[141] *Hel.* 12, 42–45.

[142] *Hel.* 12, 45: *Sed forte dicant has esse potationes uulgarium et leuissimorum hominum. Veniamus ergo ad horum potentium et fortissimorum conuiuia.*

[143] *Hel.* 13, 46: *ad conuiuia proeliatorum uenimus . . .* 47: *Primo minoribus poculis uelut ferentariis pugna praeluditur . . . ubi res calere coeperit poscunt maioribus poculis, feruor inardescit Martius . . .* 48: *Tunc de integro potum instaurant suum, tunc deferuntur fialae, tunc maximi crateres quasi instrumenta bellorum . . .*

[144] *Hel.* 13, 50: *Cernas iuuenes terribilis uisu hostibus de conuiuio portari foras et inde ad conuiuium reportari, repleri ut exhauriant et exhauriri ut bibant.*

[145] Military men from the imperial court in Milan must have assisted, together with the civilian dignitaries, at the Easter vigil. The demonstrative pronoun implying proximity (*horum potentium et fortissimorum hominum*) may indicate that the personalities at whom the sermon is directed or men in the same position are 'here present'.

[146] Compare Amm. Marc. 14, 6, 16–17 (the burlesque procession of the household) and Ambr. *Hel.* 8, 24 (the return, in the rôle of *seruus currens*, of the *obsonator* who boasts of the fish he bought at the price of its weight in gold); Amm. 14, 6, 25: *Ex turba uero imae sortis et paupertinae, in tabernis aliqui pernoctant uinariis . . .* and Ambr. *Hel.* 12, 42: *sedent in foribus tabernarum homines tunicam non habentes nec sumptum sequentis diei. De imperatoribus et potestatibus iudicant, immo regnare sibi uidentur et exercitibus imperare . . .* Ammianus' plebeians play dice and bet on the races, while those of Ambrose venture judgements on emperors and authorities and rebuild the world.

[147] Terence for Ammianus (14, 6, 16: *ne Sannione quidem, ut ait comicus, relicto*), Plautus—for whom there is a well-known fashion in the fourth century (cf. Jerome, *ep.* 22, 30: *post noctium crebras uigilias . . . Plautus sumebatur in manibus*, and *Adv. Iouinianum*, 1, 1: *. . . ut illud Plautinarum litterarum ei possit aptari: "Has quidem praeter Sibyllam leget nemo"*, a quotation from memory from the *Pseudolus*, vv. 25–26)—for Ambrose (the figure and speech of the *obsonator*). See J. Jackson, "Una pagina plautina nel *De Helia* di Ambrogio", *Vichiana*, 6 (1977), 231–240.

of Caesarea *On Fasting* and homily 14 *Against Drunkenness*.[148] His picture of horrible and deplorable drunks owes a debt also to a powerful chapter in Pliny.[149] Furthermore, in the 390s Juvenal, who is highly appreciated in the fourth century, could be the common reference of both our 'satirists':[150] they appear to develop the poet's cruel verses about the *cena* at which the poor guests and the freedmen of an avaricious patron throw cups of bad wine at each other's heads until their blood mixes with the disgusting drink.[151]

The two works were composed at the same time and their authors belong to the same generation. There are similarities between their respective antecedents: both come from the *militia*, the public service—the one from the *militia armata*, and the other, ex-governor of Aemilia-Liguria, from the civilian *militia*.[152] This kind of training leaves its marks; it provokes an equally sensitive interest for the good or bad behaviour of the *milites* and their dignity or indignity. A shared taste, corresponding to a strong temperament, for a violent mix of genres and tones brings them close to each other.[153] Nevertheless, one more inclusive factor outweighs the others: the foundation of their inspiration is the same. It is the same moralizing indignation against over-indulgence, vices, letting oneself go, the absence of self-respect, and all things that cause or explain decline in its two forms: for Ammianus it is decadence in relation to the *sobrietas* of the Romans of old times, for Ambrose a drop from the high ideal of Judaeo-Christian fasting, although his birth and the social position of his family make him also sensitive to the loss of *dignitas*. However, their indignation has a positive goal, namely that of calling to order the indolent, the frivolous and those who are asleep, even if it entails shaking them violently: "Wake up! Tomorrow it will be too late."

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[148] *PG* 31, cs. 163–184; cs. 185–198 and cs. 443–464 (in particular ch. 7).

[149] Plin. *nat.* 14, 137–148.

[150] See 28, 4, 14. Juvenal is mentioned more than 70 times in the commentaries of Servius on Virgil. The scholia on Juvenal are datable to the fourth century: cf. L.D. Reynolds, *Texts and Transmission. A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford, 1983), 200.

[151] Iuv. 5, 24–29: *Qualis cena tamen! Vinum quod sucida nolit/lana pati: de conuiua Corybanta uidebis./Iurgia proludunt, sed mox et pocula torques/saucius et rubra deterges uulnera mappa/inter uos quotiens libertorumque cohortem/pugna Saguntina feruet commissa lagona.*

[152] J. Fontaine, "Unité et diversité . . .", 453. On the importance of the notion of *generation* for a 'horizontal decompartmentalizing' between 'pagan works' and 'Christian works', see 435–436.

[153] J. Fontaine, *op. cit.*, 453–463.

It is true that Ammianus calls to *sobrietas*, *frugalitas* as well as *siccitas*, almost a synonym of *grauitas*.[154] This ancient Roman virtue is nevertheless less distant than one might think to a certain kind of Christian asceticism, that promoted by the bishop of Milan, controlled and moderated by the laws of the Church and well removed from heretical errors and from extremist monachism.[155] The appeal for ancient Roman values connected with 'sobriety', and for Christian values connected with abstinence respectively determine their shared and violent condemnation of *gula* and *ebrietas*. This ethical reason is joined by the shared awareness of fatal danger threatening Rome if its best defenders—the senators and *milites*—came to abandon and betray the essence of *Romanitas*, the superiority of moral values which, having made Rome's power, was now its last bulwark against the barbarians.[156]

An admirer of Julian's chastity, understood as total sexual abstinence, Ammianus would find in Ambrose the master and panegyrist of virginity. Julian, who had castrated himself spiritually, could take his place among the 'continent' praised by the Apostle (I *Cor.* 7, 1) and exalted by Ambrose—those who for religious reasons choose sexual abstinence, the 'renouncement of the flesh'. At this point, however, the similarity reaches its limits. Indeed, Ammianus' revulsion against eunuchs, whom he abhors all as being against nature,[157] is a far cry from the words of Christ (*Matth.* 19, 12) cited and commented upon several times by Ambrose.[158] While for the bishop of

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[154] Julian is its incarnation (25, 4, 4). Note the principal occurrences of *sobrius/sobrietas* at 14, 6, 15; 15, 4, 3 (*uetus illa Romana uirtus et sobria*); 16, 7, 6; 21, 10, 6; 21, 16, 5; 22, 7, 9; 22, 16, 18; 31, 10, 6; 31, 10, 19. The opposed vice, the lack of self-control and of restraint, is expressed by *nimius/nimietas* (14, 1, 1; 15, 8, 2; 18, 4, 3; 28, 1, 21; 29, 1, 22). Ambrose, *ep.* 6, 2 (*CSEL* 82/1, 39, ed. O. Faller) recommends to priests the observation of a *sobria grauitas*. See P.M. Camus, *Ammien Marcellin* . . . (Paris, 1967), 103–109.

[155] On Marcion, Tatianus and the Encratite sect and their shared hatred of 'women's works', see P. Brown, *The Body and Society* . . ., 83–102.

[156] In Ambrose, young barbarians serving at table (*Hel.* 13, 46) make fun of their Roman masters, who can no longer stand on their feet or sit their horses (*Hel.* 13, 50).

[157] See the denunciation of castration 'invented' by Semiramis (14, 6, 17), the vituperation of the eunuch Eusebius (in particular at 18, 4, 4) and the praise of the law established by Domitian forbidding castration (18, 4, 5). The exception in order to flatter Eutherius (16, 7, 4–10) only confirms the rule.

[158] "There are eunuchs who are such from their mother's womb, there are those who have become eunuchs through the acts of men, and there are some who have made themselves such, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (cf. Ambr. *De uiduis* 13, 75 and *De uirginitate* 6, 28).

Milan nothing is more precious than consacrated virginity, Ammianus, despite his admiration, from a moralist point of view, of Julian's chastity, as of that of an exceptional and in some ways separate being,[159] is compelled by his realism and his concern for the Empire to consider the demographic effects of the absolute chastity as Ambrose recommends it. These would be catastrophic, if it came to spread in all classes of society. When it comes to sexual conduct, it is not Julian but Valentinian who is the model emperor, "honouring sexual modesty in everything, chaste at home and outside, not knowing anything impure"—chaste, therefore, but also husband and father.[160] Ammianus' preference is for the classical and Augustan ethics of *temperantia*, or self-control, which is compatible with nature as well as with the upholding of the Empire, and not for the later ethics of renouncement of the flesh.

The parallel outlined here between Ammianus and Ambrose in terms of preaching has already been suggested based on the forms and literary aesthetics.[161] The aesthetic means are subordinated to the same moral intention: to make an *impression*, in the strongest sense, upon the audience, a real, living audience, which at first is renitent against the hard, or even insulting, lesson imparted to it. The 'classical' Ambrose does not hesitate to introduce into his religious discourse more violent contrasts and more shrill incongruities than the 'vulgar' or 'baroque' Ammianus does into his historical discourse.

This statement leads us to qualify our approval to the conclusions drawn by E. Auerbach from his analysis of the 'representation of reality' by Ammianus. The example chosen by him, the arrest of Petrus Valuomeres (15, 7), is particularly appropriate for illustrating the originality of Ammianus' *mimesis* through the violent contrast, gravid with potential disturbances, between the firm and steadfast attitude of the prefect and the insolent dynamics of the ringleader—a contrast framed by the movements of the crowd "snaking" between the two. According to Auerbach, the priority given by Ammianus

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[159] See 25, 4, 2: *Et primum ita inuiolata castitate enituit ut post amissam coniugem nihil umquam uenerium (attingeret)*. The fact that the first one that Ammianus highlights among Julian's virtues is *castitas*, the supreme virtue in the eyes of the Christians, owes more to a defensive strategy than to his personal scale of values.

[160] See 30, 9, 2: *Omni pudicitiae cultu domi castus et foris, nullo contagio conscientiae uiolatus obscenae, nihil incestum* . . . Cf. G. Sabbah, "*Castum, incestum*: éléments d'une éthique sexuelle dans l'*Histoire* d'Ammien Marcellin", Latomus 53/2 (1994), 334–339.

[161] By J. Fontaine, "Unité et diversité . . .", 452–463.

to the gesture and to the sensory over both the psychological and the 'distance' created in Tacitus by the nobility of the style strongly marks the difference between the representation of Ammianus Marcellinus and that of Tacitus.[162] However, although the analysis of this example is strong and convincing, his conclusions cannot be generalized for the whole of the *Res gestae*. While Auerbach sees Ammianus' *mimesis* as a quasi-revolutionary shift, the concept of *renouatio*—which is also the political watchword of the Theodosian era (*renouatio imperii*)—is more appropriate for the entirety of the *Res gestae*. Renovation is not the same as revolution: Ammianus' aesthetics do not subvert the previous models, but they renew them by recapturing preceding forms of aesthetics—archaic, classical, 'modern', sophistic, etc.—in a certainly cumulative approach, which, however, also brings unexpected renewal to the writing of history.

Nor does renovation mean a breach of continuity: with his respect for the classical *auctores*—Cicero, the great Roman historians, mainly Sallust and Tacitus, and the poets, first and foremost Virgil—Ammianus has kept to this side of the more theatrical, grim and morbid representation which the major Christian writers, Jerome, Ambrose and Augustine, have sometimes given of reality.[163] This does not make him a belated classicizer. He boldly unites the opposites like the general aesthetics of his time[164] which admit the coexistence of the aristocratic neo-classicism of the *missorium* of Madrid and of the consular diptychs on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of a realistic and popular, even grotesque, art;[165] the latter is what Ammianus refers to in order to evoke the unfinished humanity of the Huns, these barbarians among the barbarians, who can hardly be distinguished from primary matter.[166] Ammianus' representation gathers together strongly apparent opposites, depending on contrasting aesthetic universes: the genuine Virgilian subtlety used in the construction of the

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[162] E. Auerbach, "L'arrestation de Pierre Valvomère", in *Mimesis. La représentation de la réalité dans la littérature occidentale* (Paris, 1968, French transl.), 61–87.

[163] Ambrose is aware of going very far (too far?): cf. *Hel.* 15, 53: *Putatis me tamquam uino crapulatum intemperantius ieiunii praedicationi hunc miscuisse sermonem.* E. Auerbach, "L'arrestation de Pierre Valvomère", in *Mimesis*, 74f., stresses that this "highly coloured realism . . . penetrates also into the writings of the Christian authors", in particular Jerome and Augustine (Ambrose should be added here).

[164] J. Fontaine, "Le style d'Ammien Marcellin . . .", in *Cognitio gestorum* . . ., 27–37.

[165] See R. Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome, la fin de l'art antique*, French transl. (Paris, 1970).

[166] See 31, 2, 2: *quales in commarginandis pontibus effigiati stipites dolantur incompte.*

major episodes and the depth and delicate chiaroscuro of symbols cohabit with the massive and heavy construction of the emperors' biographical portraits, a number of images drawn from the everyday register, especially from the world of animals and the universe of games,[167] and the shocking brutality of trivial detail.[168] All these means, with their contrasting diversity, converge for the aesthetic persuasion of an audience which we believe not so much heterogeneous in its socio-political composition as very eclectic in its taste and sensitive to the strongly and diversely spiced flavours of all styles, as if to a supreme refinement reserved for the discerning. Because of its extraordinary richness and complexity, Ammianus' work is a world that embraces his personal life as well as the history and spirit of his times. Painted in black and white in order to contrast good and evil, justice and violence, this world is dominated by long-recognized obsessions: the anguish of the present and anxiety about the future, the haunting omnipresence of death and the passion for justice. When considered in its progressive genesis, it is in constant expansion. It begins with an almost too strongly autobiographical account, dominated by the adventures of a young officer full of promise and hope; then it expands to become the history of a man, one man alone, although he was also a hero destined to become a myth: Julian. At last, in the final books, it rises to the level of a history of the Empire, combining East and West, before opening up into an authentically universal history in the last book, into which rushes the Unknown, the radical Other, in the guise of the barbarians.

Rarely will a work of history have integrated so fully both the personal and the universal dimension; rarely will it have achieved detaching itself to such a degree, as if under the reader's eye, from the anecdotic vicissitudes of the author's life, for devoting itself to

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[167] Cf. the remarkable analysis by C. Salemme, *Similitudini nella storia: un capitolo su Ammiano Marcellino* (Naples, 1989, Studi latini I).

[168] Constantius never blew his nose, scratched it nor spat in public (16, 10, 10: *nec spuens aut os aut nasum tergens uel fricans*); he never tasted a fruit in all his life (21, 16, 7: *nec pomorum quoad uixerat gustauerit*); the prefect of the City, Lampadius, prides himself on being able to do anything better than anyone else, including spitting (27, 3, 5: *Lampadius . . . homo indignanter admodum sustinens, si, etiam cum spueret, non laudaretur ut id quoque prudenter praeter alios faciens*); the great Probus, *Anicianae domus culmen*, four times *praefectus praetorio*, can hardly breathe outside his prefectures, like a fish out of water (27, 11, 3: *atque ut natantium genus elemento suo expulsum haud ita diu spirat in terris, ita ille marcebat absque praefecturis*).

decipher the Other:[169] the mystery of Julian and of his tragic destiny, the nature, human or divine, of Rome and the conditions of its survival or its eternity, the essence of the barbarians, men or beasts, and the meaning of their formidable appearance—destructive scourge, divine punishment or the condition for sudden saving awareness? The questions that Ammianus asks himself and that his work asks us go well beyond a fastidious weighing of what is 'real' and what is 'represented'. Ammianus' Goths and Huns are real enough, but they are just as 'literary'; by his admirable art of representation, the historian has given them *also* the general and eternal value of myth, that of the man/horse, the centaur, as well as the chiaroscuro depth of an elemental symbol, that of destructive—or regenerating—fire. For his dark and dramatic work ends in a fearsome conflagration, but also, in a final paradox, on a glimmer of hope.[170]

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[169] For an overview, see E. Cizek, "L'image de l'autre et les mentalités romaines du I^{er} au IV^{e} siècle de notre ère", *Latomus* 48/2 (1989), 360–371.

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CHAPTER THREE

MINOR LATIN HISTORIANS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY A.D.

Giorgio Bonamente

Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Festus and the anonymous author of *Epitome de Caesaribus* represent in their entirety an emblematic cultural phenomenon of an era during which the Roman Empire experienced its last political, administrative and cultural revival: this revival was promoted by Diocletian's and Constantine's reforms and pursued for about half a century until the end of the reign of Theodosius the Great. Our authors' short works are united by their perspective and purpose: the perspective embraces the long history of Rome, in the case of Eutropius and Festus from its foundation right up to their days, in the case of Aurelius Victor and the *Epitome* from the beginning of the reign of Augustus; the purpose is to propose the continuity of the history of Rome in its ethical values, political institutions and military prestige as a model for the state of the empire and its future security.

Even though the four works have common characteristics and resonant links, they do have different content and structure and must therefore be viewed in their historical context, which sees the first three works authored in the sixth and seventh decade of the fourth century A.D., whereas the fourth work was written after the death of Theodosius the Great in 395; the fact that the fourth work is still mostly considered to be an anonymous work sets clear limits to any unitary valuation.

Actually this small canon of minor Latin historians of the fourth century results just from the fact that they represent the only texts handed down to us; this historiographic production includes the lost *Annales* of Virius Nicomachus Flavianus. It also needs to be borne in mind that, in a way, the *Origo Constantini imperatoris* has to be excluded without dispute for it covers only a short period;[1] on the

[1] Mazzarino 1966, p. 227.

other hand, the complex *Origo gentis Romanae* (Aurelius Victor's text is the sole portion being considered here) has contents and purposes strongly analogous to the breviaries, with whom they share the aim of presenting an universal history of the Roman world which dates back to the Age of Saturn.[2]

It is noteworthy that the four breviaries which are left represent, together with Ammianus Marcellinus, the pagan Latin historiography of the fourth century. They provide evidence for the contemporary and vivid confrontation between Roman culture and Christianity as much as they reflect their views on the past from the perspective of the specific problems of the fourth century: the renewed pressure by the Persians on the eastern border, the loss of identity of the Senate under the new regime of Diocletian, the generally increasing problems caused by the barbarians and the importance of the armed forces.

Certainly that historiography was not the archaic attempt to recover the Roman traditionalism embodied in the Roman Senate, the prestige of political patterns and classical culture.[3] Such archaic attempts had been made without success by Julian the Apostate, Virius Nicomachus Flavianus, and the usurper Eugenius, to mention only the two most significant. The fourth century historiography was rather the expression of a reflective desire to bring the past back to life; it was the axiom for that idealistic programme which Aurelius Symmachus synthesised in his grief-stricken appeal to render the altar of the goddess Victoria to the Senate with the sententious expression *consuetudinis amor magnus est.*[4]

It is within the senatorial class which had been transformed by Constantine's reforms, a class clearly divided between a senate in Rome and another in Constantinople[5] and by now composed also of men who progressed in their political careers thanks to their culture, that we find Aurelius Victor, Eutropius and Festus. They were united by the need to offer an easy-to-read compendium, such as the *breviarium*, in order to corroborate the values and prestige of the Roman tradition in its widest acceptance of pragmatic history, culture and religion. They were all three high court dignitaries who

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[2] Momigliano 1958, pp. 4ff.
[3] Bloch 1963, pp. 214ff.
[4] Symm. *Relat.* 3,4.
[5] Chastagnol 1992, p. 261.

had already achieved the rank of *viri clarissimi* at the time when they wrote their brief histories; and they continued to pursue prestigious careers until finally becoming *praefectus urbi*, as in the case of Aurelius Victor in 389 A.D., or *praefectus praetorio per Orientem*, as in the case of Eutropius, who eventually received the honour of becoming consul together with the emperor Valentinian II in the year 387, while Festus concluded his career as proconsul of Asia in 378 A.D.[6]

Their works are expressions of a culture where the traditional dimension of *otium litteratum* fluxed with the processes of new teachings at the behest of cultured officials with specific juridical authority and administrative technique.[7] Two of them, Aurelius Victor and Eutropius, both of provincial origin, confirm a transformation of the empire in which the traditional centres of imperial culture such as Athens, Rome and Alexandria by now suffered from competing centres of higher education located, apart from Constantinople, in the outskirts, and which were likewise capable, as were Antioch, Burdigala, and Berytus, of sending the imperial government men of culture and law who were professional administrators, and many of whom eventually achieved senatorial status.[8]

Their social position assured the success of their work, as was also the case of other personalities of the fourth century cultural scene such as Themistius, Ausonius, Nicomachus Flavianus and Macrobius, but this meant that their history pamphlets had also to take a definite stand with regard to imperial politics. In fact, their lives had been influenced in various ways by their meeting with Julian the Apostate, as in the case of Aurelius Victor,[9] who greeted with favour his coming to power and received from him in 361 A.D. the governorship of the *Pannonia secunda*; and in the case of Eutropius, who participated in the expedition to Persia in 363,[10] and who was subsequently involved, along with Libanius and Ammianus Marcellinus, in a conspiracy of as clear a pagan imprint as that contrived by Theodorus, to whom we shall return in his biography. Different is the case of Festus who, although a pagan, assumed the role of investigator in the aforementioned conspiracy and investigated influential

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[6] Cf. *infra*, p. 114.
[7] Pavan 1952.
[8] Petit 1957; Pinto 1974, pp. 156ff.; Mazza 1973, pp. 685ff.
[9] Aur. Vict. 42,17; 24f.; Den Boer 1968, p. 271.
[10] Eutrop. 10,16,1.

cultural and pagan circles, earning himself the title of "atheist" from Eunapius.[11]

In the picture of fourth century historiography we can see that a specific literary type was chosen by our authors, which in one way suited their personal circumstances as busy dignitaries in the imperial government and therefore unable to devote an ample *otium* to their duty as historians; and which in another way allowed them to offer a general vision, as in Eutropius, or an ample chronological reach, as in all the others, as if the coherence, the development and the prestige of the history of Rome was evident before and despite Christianity, which in the central years of the fourth century was one of the cultural and political themes of prime importance in imperial politics and in cultural strife.[12]

In fact, the historiography of the fourth century played its own role in the re-elaboration of the cultural and religious identity of the empire after Constantine opted for the Christian religion, sharing with ample resumption the activity of exegesis of the classical texts, which brings to mind Aelius Donatus, Servius, and Macrobius, who were exponents of the greatest commitment to re-propose the idea of eternal Rome under a religious and historical-political profile.

During the recurrent successes of the past, the Roman world had always found its strength not only in its own political institutions and *religio* but also in its *imperium*. And it was therefore natural that some senatorial circles in Rome, among which were the dynasties of the Symmachi and the Nicomachi, came together with members of the emerging culture in Constantinople and in the provincial centres, as in the case of Themistius and Libanius, in an attempt to bring back the culture of the past.[13]

The fact that the short works being presently discussed were initially read within the court ambit and were addressed directly to the reigning emperor, as were the breviaries of Eutropius and Festus (and presumably also that of Aurelius Victor), must not however lead to an over-estimation of their ideal function: certainly Valens would not have placed the two breviaries of his *magistri memoriae* under his

[11] Cf. *infra*, p. 115.

[12] The edict of Julian for the schools (*C. Th.* 13,3,5) underlines the connection between classical culture and religion in order to avoid its being re-elaborated and adopted by the Christians. Cf. Klein 1981, pp. 73ff.

[13] De Labriolle 1934, pp. 348ff.; Paschoud 1967, 326f.; Cameron 1976, pp. 1ff.

pillow, while the most important literary circles of the empire were organising readings of historians of a much wider reflection and of a higher rhetorical level, or of great poets whose divine inspiration was recognised, while, in the contemporary schools of traditional imprint, a canon of *exempla* and *compendia* consolidated from use must surely have circulated.[14]

A characteristic which is evident from the first reading of the historical breviaries, and in a certain sense from Ammianus Marcellinus, is that of a "neutrality" with respect to the decisive contemporary contrast between Christians and traditionalists, because their works do not portray the virulent and direct controversy that we find in the *Caesares* by Julian the Apostate and in the *Vitae sophistarum* by Eunapius, or even in the later Zosimus: there is even the tendency not to mention Christianity at all.[15]

We must bear in mind that these authors were forced to respect the rules of the literary type that imposed pragmatic criteria. And this is more evident in comparison with the "ecclesiastical history" begun by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, and with the same contemporary revival in Christian circles of the chronological type. (Eusebius, the *Chronographer of 354* and Jerome have acquired an exclusive for the Christians).[16] A further move to avoid the problems relevant to Christianity was due to the sources available, among which the *Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte*,[17] a history of the empire for the best part edited around 284 A.D., was prominent, but which buried its roots in a secular historiographical tradition still deeply marked by the teachings of Livius.[18]

However, it cannot be denied that the continued silence regarding Christianity around the second half of the fourth century was a deliberate move and well identified by contemporaries: Constantius II had had the altar of the goddess Victoria removed from the senate in Rome in 357 A.D. and drastic laws were enacted to suspend the traditional cult and to close the temples,[19] while the emperor

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[14] Michelotto 1977, pp. 104ff.
[15] Momigliano 1963, pp. 87ff.
[16] Momigliano 1963, pp. 83ff.
[17] Enmann 1884. On the presence of the EKG in the fourth century historians, cf. Barnes 1970, pp. 14ff. Strong doubts have been expressd in Den Boer 1972, p. 187.
[18] Hellegouarc'h 1994, pp. 169–186.
[19] *C. Th.* 16,10,4; cf. Klein 1995, pp. 131ff.

occupied himself in placating the Arian controversy which had caused tension throughout the empire.[20] A useful literary key to the silence of these historians regarding the "new" Christian phenomenon is that it was a specific instrument of opposition: only fifty years after the new religious policies established by Constantine men of pagan culture could have continued to consider it a negative lapse to be restrained and obliterated; they would thus attempt to recuperate that secular *continuum* of a Rome considered eternal,[21] whose successes gave a foundation and prestige to the traditional religion.

There are some themes or valuations already been thoroughly analysed by modern scholars, often by means of complex comparisons of the respective sources which confirm this hypothesis; among them, one is the positive valuation of the role of the senate, and the other is the exaltations of culture as the foundation to act well.

To the political function of the traditional senate is no longer given prime importance, but there is an emphasis rather on a secondary aspect, which was hinted at during the reign of Julian, as confirmed in the *Gratiarum actio* delivered by the consul Claudius Mamertinus on January 1, 362 in Constantinople, regarding the equal status of the senators and the prince, a boasted theme of Julian the Apostate's politics: it takes the name of *civilitas*, and if it has a specific elaboration and a particularly wide use in Eutropius, it is however a theme which recurs also in the work by Aurelius Victor and in the *Epitome*.[22]

With regard to culture and rhetorical education, they are, in Aurelius Victor's opinion, an indispensable basis for the making of princes, even taking as an example Cyrus the Great,[23] while Eutropius put into profile the culture of his two ideal princes, Marcus Aurelius and Julian.[24] It is also worthwhile remembering that the author of the *Origo gentis Romanae* thought it opportune to record that Romulus and Remus had had a rhetorical education, both in Greek and in

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[20] Cf. Bonamente 2000, p. 20.
[21] Paschoud 1967.
[22] *Paneg.* 11,22: *(Iulianus) mixtus agmini togatorum, non multum differens a magistratibus suis et genere et colore vestitus*. Cf. Bidez 1965 (2), pp. 213ff.; Scivoletto 1970, pp. 14ff.; Bonamente 1986, p. 168.
[23] Aur. Vict. 40,13.
[24] Eutrop. 8,14; 10,16.

Latin, and it is enough to mention the famous invective by Ammianus Marcellinus referring to the lack of cultural attention by the aristocracy of Rome.[25]

In order to denote this historiography of the fourth century we can use the words of Aurelius Victor; according to him it is the duty of history to evenly distribute that glory which is often attributed to those who are unworthy of it: *Quin etiam aliquanti . . . in caelestium numerum referuntur aegre exequiis digni. Quis ni fides gestarum rerum obstitisset, quae neque honestos praemiis memoriae frustrari sinit neque improbis aeternam illustremque famam procedere, nequiquam peteretur virtus, cum verum illud atque unicum decus cuique gratia tribueretur demptum impie bonis.*[26] If it is evident that the improper assignment of subsequently rectifying the injustice of the present is left to history, then these words capture the ethical commitment with which these "minor Historians" assumed the role of *munus Minervae.*[27]

Before moving on to the individual authors, it is opportune to remember that the uncertainties relating to the title attributed to their work by modern publishers, *breviary* or *epitome*, go back for the most part to the traditional manuscript: in some cases the publishers preferred the title which they assumed corresponded to their evaluation of the individual work, based on the presumption that the term *epitome* is best suited to an adaptation of a determinate work, as in the case of Livy; whereas the term *breviarium* can be attributed to a work that, while in its summarised structure, presents its own physiognomy. It is not by chance that the title of the works by Aurelius Victor, Eutropius and Festus goes back to the title of "breviary", while for the anonymous work which proposes part of the text of Aurelius Victor there is the tendency to use the term *epitome*, which in certain aspects is incorrect.[28]

Sextus Aurelius Victor[29] was a native of the province of Africa, and appears to owe his culture to his brilliant career which presumably

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[25] *Origo* 21,3; cf. Cracco Ruggini 1998, pp. 303ff.

[26] Aur. Vict. 33,25–26. The context is quite remarkable in that it deals with the murder of Gallienus, symbol of the worst anti-senatorial politics.

[27] Symm. *Epist.* 3,50.

[28] *Reall. Antike u.Christentum, s.v. Epitome*, 38 (1961), pp. 447ff.; Eadie 1967, pp. 10–13. The references are to the paragraphs relative to the various authors regarding the problems connected to the titles under which the works have been published.

[29] The complete name is taken from an inscription on the base of a statue ded-

started under Constantius II and reached an apex under Theodosius the Great.[30] In 361 he was summoned to Sirmium by the emperor Julian, who must have already known his pagan beliefs and could not have but kept in mind the conclusion of the *Cesares* and the negative evaluation both of the politics of Constantius II towards the Persians, and the greediness of his palatine ministers and provincial governors.[31] As a sign of imperial favour he received the governorship of the *Pannonia secunda*, with the status of *consularis*, and was honoured with a bronze statue.[32] His firm acceptance of the politics of Julian could have caused him, after the Emperor's death in 363, some counterblows to his career, but not so much as to arrest it, if, about thirty years later, in 389, he was Prefect of the *Urbs* during the reign of Theodosius.[33]

The *Liber de Caesaribus* appears to have been written before September 9, 360, as the author indicates in the last paragraph[34] that Constantius II had reigned for twenty-three years. In fact, the work bears evidence to the conflicts already in motion between the Augustus and Julian, who had rebelled in February of the same year and self-proclaimed himself Augustus in November: it cannot be excluded that the book was completed after the death of Constantius II on November 3, 361.[35]

Since he writes about the whole imperial history up to his day implies referring to a division in already consolidated periods,[36] where he considers the principality as unitary and locates its beginning during the reign of Augustus, while Julius Caesar was placed at the end of the republican age and, more precisely, during the civil wars.[37]

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icated to Thedosius the Great in Rome by the very same Aurelius Victor in the year 389 A.D. Cf. CIL VI 1186: *Sex(tus) Aur(elius) Victor v(ir) c(larissimus) Urbi prae(fectus).*

[30] Aur. Vict. 20,6. Cf. Dufraigne 1975, pp. 9–15.

[31] Aur. Vict. 42,20–25.

[32] Amm. Marc. 21,10,6.

[33] CIL VI 1186; ILS 29345; Amm. Marc. 21,10,6.

[34] Aur. Vict. 42,20–21.

[35] The hypothesis is supported by Syme 1971, pp. 229f., also on the grounds of observations that historians do not usually make about reigning emperors. Cf. Den Boer 1972, p. 20; Neri 1992, pp. 34f., with bibliography.

[36] Among others must be noted Florus who, in his *Epitome* (*Praef.* 1), dated the intervening years from his own epoch, starting with Augustus.

[37] Gagé 1936, pp. 279–342. Note the attenuation of the central role of Augustus in Eutropius. The series of *Cesares* by Suetonius, which begins with Julius Caesar, is relatively isolated in the tradition; cf. Bonamente 1993, pp. 714ff.

In fact, the central figure of Augustus appears as a common character in as much of the pagan tradition of the *Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte* (*EKG*) as in the Christian interpretation of the empire, for which it is sufficient to quote the *Chronographer of 354*[38] and the subsequent historical consecration of Paul Orosius.[39]

There is a strong emphasis in the work on the ethics of the princes and the components of the royal family, where the s*obrietas* is appreciated and the vices are condemned; another important parameter deals with the cultural aspect, which represents a touchstone of the good and bad emperors, described with such frequency and evidence that it seems a projection of his individual case of those who owe their social ascent to their rhetorical formation.[40] The culture and ethics of an emperor are, as Aurelius Victor is concerned, two fundamental guarantees of a good government.[41]

The senate constitutes a reference point for the whole span of the history of the principate as an element of continuity and of institutional, political and ethical guarantee; when it functions poorly, Aurelius Victor inexorably and repeatedly expresses negative judgements, deploring in particular the insult to the privileges achieved and the pliability with which it appears in the eyes of the military.[42] He shares with other historians of the EKG the identification of the turning point constituted by the unhappy age of Valerianus and by the edict of Gallienus which removed all military commands from the senators.[43] His strong attacks on the administrative apparatu of the empire with reference both to the past and, in the conclusion of the work where he explicitly refers to it—the contemporary situation—are preferably geared towards the inferior and intermediary

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[38] Cf. Zecchini 1990, p. 357.

[39] Fabbrini 1974, pp. 170ff. Worthwhile noting is the close relationship between the central role of Augustus and the Christian interpretation of Virgil's fourth Eclogue proclaimed in Constantine's *Oratio ad Sanctorum coetum* (19–21); Pizzani 1993, pp. 809ff.

[40] Aur. Vict. 20,5: *Rure ortus tenui ac indocto patre in haec tempora vitam praestiti studiis tantis honestiorem.*

[41] 13,7: *Adeo boni malive in republica nihil est, quod in diversum traduci nequeat moribus praesidentium*; 35,14: *adhuc virtutibus principum res attolli facile vel afflictas, easque firmiores praeceps vitiis dari.* Noteworthy is the contrast between culture and ethics in the summarised judgement of the Julio-claudian dynasty; cf. Den Boer 1968, p. 257.

[42] Aur. Vict. 37,7; 39,7.

[43] Aur. Vict. 33,34: *primus ipse (scl. Gallienus), metu socordiae suae, ne imperium ad optimos nobilium transferretur, senatum militia vetuit et adire exercitum.*

ranks of the plethora (which can still be defined with good approximation as the equestrian order), rather than to the superior levels, which start from the *clarissimi*.[44]

The religious traditionalism of Aurelius Victor emerges in some nodal points, as in the positive presentation of the religious politics of Diocletian (39,45: *veterrimae religiones castissime curatae*) and, on the silence about the persecution, in deploring that in the year 348 A.D. the *ludi saeculares* were skipped.[45] Regarding the augural science, while professing scepticism on its utility (38,5: *Proinde ardum fatalia devertere, eoque futuri notio superflua*), he is interested throughout in the auspices of decisive events;[46] regarding the imperial apotheosis, while having recorded seven cases, he prefers to keep to the criterion of an ethical-political evaluation (*bonus princeps*) regarding the sacred implications of the institution.[47]

A characteristic *topos* of the *Caesares*, in which his pessimism can be seen, is to note the cause of death of the emperors with an insistence that doesn't appear in the other breviaries.[48]

It is believed that Aurelius Victor, as with other minor historians and the author of the *Historia Augusta*, had at their disposition a single principal source, the EKG,[49] and that this circumstance explains the analogies of content, narrative procedure, lexicon and tendency which unite them. We must remember that while in his first identification this source seemed to have embraced the chronological span that goes from the battle of Actium up to 284 A.D. (based on the presumption that the *Historia Augusta* was from the first Constantinian age), more recent studies, also regarding the various hypotheses about the dating of the *Historia Augusta*, have moved the end of the EKG forward to 337 A.D.[50] and even up to 357 A.D.: this would have given Aurelius Victor the opportunity of referring to a source almost up to the conclusion of his work.[51]

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[44] Cf. Den Boer 1972, pp. 26f.
[45] Aur. Vict. 28,2. The theme recurs in Zosim. 2,7,1–2.
[46] Montero 1987, pp. 989–1000.
[47] Aur. Vict. 33,30: *Adeo principes atque optimi mortalium, vitae decore quam quaesitis nominibus aut compositis, quantum coniciatur, caelum adeunt seu fama hominum dei celebrantur modo.* He rarely uses the official formula of *relatio in numerum divorum* which instead recurs regularly in Eutropius (*infra*). Cf. Bonamente 1989, p. 42.
[48] Den Boer 1968, p. 267; Den Boer 1972, pp. 101–111.
[49] Enmann 1884.
[50] Barnes 1970, p. 13.
[51] Bird 1984, p. XIII; Bleckmann 1995; Festy 1999, p. XV.

It is generally recognised that the outlines of a definite tradition of imperial history regularly come to the surface; but alongside this we also find the patrimony of a rhetorical and scholastic tradition, with manuals and anthologies which our authors used during their formation. The latter was in itself also very stable and canonised. Nor can it be denied, at least for Aurelius Victor who openly admits it, that they were able to directly consult historical texts which were available in their libraries,[52] naturally excluding those margins of originality that the author achieved by selecting and perhaps adding, according to the plan and the perspective of the *Caesares*. Under his stylistic profile, Aurelius Victor reveals a rhetorical tension in proposing considerations, in giving liveliness to the narration, and in neglecting the symmetry and the organic unity of the presentation when is given the possibility of deducing his judgements.

For the period from Augustus to Domitian (1,1–11,13) he also had Suetonius at his disposal and appears not to have neglected Tacitean themes, especially in the narration of the intrigues of court; from Nerva to Elagabalus (11,14–24,11) besides the EKG there was Marius Maximus (or an author designated as *ignotus*),[53] not to mention Dio Cassius, who might have been used during the preceding period. From Severus Alexander to Constantius II the *Liber de Caesaribus* has a more definite biographical structure, and this is confirmed in the *Historia Augusta* which ends up referring once more to the EKG. In this section we find the characteristics of the *Leoquelle* in which the digression regarding the decadence of the senate after the death of the Emperor Tacitus coheres.[54] For the period of the tetrarch and Constantine a prolongation of the History of Enmann was initially supposed: it would have had a pagan tendency in its narration of the circumstances of the tetrarchy (not to mention the persecutions); but would have at least expressed some themes regarding the Christian tradition surrounding Constantine (on the death of Maxentius).[55] In fact, Aurelius Victor exalts Claudius Gothicus, the ideological ancestor

[52] Aur. Vict. 11,13: *Ac mihi quidem audienti multa legentique plane compertum.*; there are strong doubts regarding the EKG in Den Boer 1972, pp. 39f.; Michelotto 1977, pp. 140ff.

[53] Syme 1971, pp. 30–53.

[54] Aur. Vict. 37,5–7.

[55] It deals with the theme by Eusebius (*HE* 9,9,9) of the deception of Maxentius who himself had set the plot.

of Constantine;[56] and he presents in a favourable way the very same Constantine, giving repeated positive evaluations of his general character, even if always in contrast with the importance of the single aspects.[57] Finally, with regard to Constantius II, Aurelius Victor, who was by now an important court official, besides the news he received personally, and which was communicated to him by the panegyric, would also have had access to official archives; in fact, his text reveals some well known themes from the two encomiums which Julian wrote as Caesar for his cousin.

In his biographies of the emperors, Aurelius Victor usually develops the various topical themes of the origins, education, political ascent, internal and foreign policies, legislation, private lives and the synthetic evaluation of the empire, according to a procedure which refers not only to before Suetonius, but also to Plutarch, and that finds confirmation in the late *Historia Augusta*.

Usually the biographies of the most important emperors, such as Vespasian, Trajan or Aurelian, present a complete and organic picture, but in some cases Aurelius Victor has reconstructed the biography in a more anecdotal and moralistic style:[58] a perfect example is that of Hadrian, where Victor neglects the major tours throughout the empire and every aspect of foreign and administrative politics;[59] instead he develops in an articulated manner only the themes of the philhellenism and the initiation to the mystic cults (14,4: *Atque initia Cereris Liberaeque, quae Eleusina dicuntur, Atheniensium modo Roma percoleret*), limiting himself to the description of a man dedicated to luxury and a comfortable life, and ending up devoting an exaggerated attention to his relationship with Antinous.[60] If we compare the corresponding picture given by Eutropius, who dedicates to Hadrian

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[56] Aur. Vict. 34,3–4: he is said to have carried out the *devotio*, from an idea taken from the *Sibillini* books, to assure victory for Rome over the Goths.

[57] Aur. Vict. 40,14; 41,5: *Hinc pro conditore seu deo habitus*; 41,17: *cuius armis, legibus, clementi imperio quasi novatam urbem Romam arbitrarentur*; 41,20: *cunctaque divino ritui paria viderentur, ni parum dignis ad publica aditum concessisset*.

[58] Aurelius Victor (19,1; 20,1–4) confuses the usurper Didius Julianus (killed by Septimius Severus) with the jurist Salvius Julianus emphasizing that the *gratia bonarum artium* survived to *saevi mores*; cf. Den Boer 1972, pp. 22–24; 44ff.

[59] Aur. Vict. 14,1: *Igitur Aelius Hadrianus, eloquio togaeque studiis accomodatior, pace ad orientem composita, Romam regreditur*.

[60] The 14th chapter, dedicated to the biography of Hadrian, focuses for almost one third of its content on the *rumores* and the considerations about Antinous (paragraphs 7–9).

two brief chapters (6–7) of his book VIII, one will immediately notice the completely different style, precise and linear, but at the same time organic and complete, which covers all the principal matters, from the debatable election proposed by Plotina, to the criterions of the foreign politics in the east and west, to the promotion of peace and his knowledge of Latin and Greek culture, to the administrative reforms, as well as to the attempt by the senate to refuse his *divini honores*,[61] without indulging in any anecdote concerning his private life.

The distribution of the historical narration over six periods, concluding with many digressions, has an ideal purpose hinged on the renewal and beginning of a new historical cycle:

I – chapters 1–5: From Augustus to Nero. Premonitions about the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.[62]
II – chapters 6–8: From Galba to Vitellius. Ethics and culture of the princes.
III – chapters 9–11: The Flavians. Elevation to the throne of *externi*.
IV – chapters 12–24: From Nerva to Alexander Severus. Moral decadence: success is not opposed by the *virtus*.[63]
V – chapters 25–37: From Maximinus of Thrace to Tacitus. Moral decadence of the senate and its abdication towards the military.[64]
VI – chapters 38–42: From Carus to Constantius II. Corruption of the imperial administration.

In assessing the structure of the work one must bear in mind the central role attributed to the chapters on the crisis of the III century (25–37) which culminates in the narration about the government of Gallienus (the emperor who had stripped the senators of military commands),[65] and concludes with the failed politics of the

[61] Eutr. 8,6,1–7,3.
[62] Aur. Vict. 5,17: *Hic finis Caesarum genti fuit: quem fore prodigiorum multa denuntiavere . . .*
[63] On the historiographical theme of virtues-successes, cf. Momigliano 1966, p. 506.
[64] Aur. Vict. 37,7: *Verum dum oblectanctur otio (scl. senatores) simulque divitiis pavent, quarum usum affluentiamque aeternitate maius putant, munivere militaribus et paene barbaris viam in se ac posteros dominandi.*
[65] Aur. Vict. 33,3–4: *Quia primus ipse, metu soocordiae suae, ne imperium ad optimos*

Emperor Tacitus (the senator who did not give back to the senate the political role it deserved). It needs to be remarked that at the time of Tacitus an era was about to end; this coincides with the digression on the decadence of the senate and with the fact that, starting from the thirty-eighth chapter, the narrative structure also changes—the former, biography-by-biography style is put aside in favour of a political history of the empire. This change in style may have followed the institutional innovation of the tetrarchy and the co-presence of *Augusti* and *Caesares* during the period of Diocletian and Constantine; but it may presumably also be due to the different sources he used for this last period.[66]

In the final section of the work, with a violent reprimand of the corruption of the imperial administrative apparatus, Aurelius Victor wanted to resume the considerations dealt with at the end of the individual historical periods. While proposing themes of an ethical character, he also points out a precise direction which should be followed: that of substituting the old ruling class of the senate—composed of the wealthy who intended to enjoy their privileges without achieving the *aeternitas* through their own value, and who had failed in their duties—with the emperor's new collaborators.

Neither does it deal with generic indications, in that Constantius II faced with decisiveness and perseverance the administrative reorganisation of the empire and because Julian, as Caesar, came down hard on ministers and corrupt officials and in doing so created a theme of confrontation with the Augustus. The *Gratiarum actio* of Claudius Mamertinus is contemporary with the work of Aurelius Victor, and is one of the most violent reprimands against the corruption of the empire. On the other hand, that of the senate—and above all in Rome—the reference of obligation is to the expressions of Ammianus Marcellinus which ascertains the abdication from the culture of the *pars melior generis humani.*

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nobilium transferretur, senatum militia vetuit ed adire exercitum. Regarding the figure of Gallienus, worn-down with bad omens (32,3–4), marked by the unhappy death of his father, Valerianus, and taken prisoner by Sapor, the converging evils of the empire are portrayed—anarchy, excessive power of the army and the humiliation of the senate, to such an extent that Aurelius Victor considers him one of the worst emperors: . . . *neque Gallieni flagitia, dum urbes erunt, occultari queant, et quisque pessimus erit par similisque semper ipsi (scl. Gallieno) habebitur* (33,29). Cf. Den Boer 1972, pp. 75–87.

[66] Dufraigne 1975, p. XLVII.

Two chapters are dedicated to the period of Constantine (40,1–41,21), where the biographical schemes are not followed. The main circumstances are presented on the various chess-boards of the empire, following the actions of the *Augusti* and the *Caesares*, giving ample reference to the personality of Constantine. This was without setting the narration around him, either for the period which he shared with his colleagues in government, and only then with Licinius, or for the period following the reunification in the year 324. Aurelius Victor considered the reunification to be a mere rapid passage to the ulterior division of the power between the sons of Constantine (41,10: *eo modo respublica unius arbitrio geri coepit, liberis Caesarum nomina diversa retentantibus; namque ea tempestate imperatori nostro Constantio insigne Caesarum datum*).

His judgement of Constantine is positive, beginning with his self-proclamation on the death of his father and moving on to the general recognition of his abilities (40,14: *At memoria mea, Constantinum, quanquam ceteris promptum virtutibus, adusque astra votis omnium subvexere*); he justifies his confrontation with Maxentius, whom he considers a tyrant, and with Licinius, for his cruelty and rebellion. His actions in government are positively valued, only expressing reserve about his collaborators of little value (41,20: *cunctaque divino ritui paria viderentur, ni parum dignis ad publica aditum concessisset*).[67]

The success of the breviary of Aurelius Victor followed an unusual course, in that it was inserted, not long after its publication, in a trilogy *Origo gentis Romanae*, made up of a first book of the same name *Origo gentis Romanae* (from Saturn to Romulus and Remus), of a second book, likewise anonymous, with the title *De viris illustribus urbis Romae* (from Proca, the king of Alba, to the death of Cleopatra) and finally of the *Liber de Caesaribus* by Aurelius Victor. It has been shown that for a long period the *Epitome de Caesaribus* had been attributed to Aurelius Victor, which came later, as we will soon see, and not the work that belongs to him, ending with the negative judgement of the ministers and officials of Constantius II.

[67] Aur. Vict. 40,2–4; 40,16; 41,20–21: especially in this last paragraph Aurelius Victor develops his favourite theme according to which an emperor must carefully choose his ministers and collaborators from whom his successes, or failures, will derive.

The Epitome de Caesaribus

Among the works presently being discussed, the *Epitome de Caesaribus* is last in chronological order with a gap of about fifty years from the other works. It can however be examined immediately after Aurelius Victor because of the close relationship of dependence and by what was expressed in the incipit: *Libellus de vita et moribus imperatorum breviatus ex libris Sexti Aurelii Victoris a Caesare Augusto usque ad Theodosium*. The author is still unknown, although studies are in progress to further constrain his chronology and characteristics; the writings can be dated between the death of Theodosius and that of Arcadius in 408.[68] Indeed, from the sources used, the chronology and the style, there is reason to attribute it to the circle of Nicomachus Flavianus Junior from which might have been drawn both the exaltation of the Roman tradition in its pagan characteristics and an attitude of respect towards Theodosius and his descendants and finally the acknowledgement that culture is the distinctive element of prestige.[69]

The usual title of *Epitome* is not authentic, in that the manuscripts give it the title of *libellus breviatus ex libris Sexti Aurelii Victoris*: it was used for the first time as an actual title of the work in the 1733 Amtzen edition in the form of *Sexti Aurelii Victoris Epitome de Caesaribus* and serves to indicate both the distinction from and the dependence on the work of Aurelius Victor. The appearance of the name of Aurelius Victor in the incipit of the manuscripts of the *Epitome* is due to the fact that the first eleven chapters (up to the death of Domitian) re-propose with few changes the first eleven chapters of the *Liber de Caesaribus*.

The term epitome, which in fact means a summary of a unique piece of work, is improper. This is not only because in the eleven aforementioned chapters the *Epitome* presents a much wider narration with more information and considerations than in the work by Aurelius Victor, but, above all, because, beginning with Nerva the *Epitome* continues to offer a narration of an extension not inferior to that of its source, but rather repeatedly tries to correct or enrich it.

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[68] *Terminus post quem* is the funeral ceremony carried out in Constantinople on the November 8, 395 A.D.: *Epit. Caes*. 48,20; *terminus ante quem* the death of Arcadius, which was not dealt with in the historical narration, following the conventional practice of not writing about living emperors. Cf. Schlumberger 1974, pp. 244f.; Barnes 1976, p. 266.

[69] Festy 1999, pp. LII–LV.

In turn, the title of *Pseudo-Aurelius Victor* chosen by some publishers makes sense, both due to the fact that the two works are placed on the same level—being real "breviaries"—and the fact that for several centuries, at least from the time of Paulus Diaconus, our *Epitome* was considered—incorrectly—as the work of Aurelius Victor.

The time when it was compiled is marked by a profound change in the lot between Christianity and Roman religious traditions, after the "providential" victory of Theodosius on the river *Frigidus*: the work in fact presents the characteristics of a repeated historiographical model, accurate in its research of information—with corrections regarding Aurelius Victor and the other historians of the EKG—but with greater dependence on the sources, both for the perspective and the style.[70]

The *Epitome* consists of four sections with different characteristics:

I – Chapters 1–11: From Augustus to Domitian.
II – Chapters 12–24: From Nerva to Alexander Severus.[71]
III – Chapters 25–38: From Maximinus the Thracian to Carus.
IV – Chapters 39–47: From Diocletian to Gratian.
V – Chapter 48: The reign of Theodosius.

The coexistence of passages with a different style and planning is noticed with reference to the various sources used. Some of these are well known, as in the case of Eutropius and Aurelius Victor. Others are reconstructed in a hypothetical way. For the first part of the work an analytical comparison can be made with the corresponding text by Aurelius Victor, which gives us a close and continuous correspondence of narrative procedure and content; but since the anonymous author would also have had the EKG at his disposal (already used by Aurelius Victor),[72] we can therefore say that the expressions and the formulations (for instance on the nature of Tiberius), for which the *Epitome* is distinguished from the *Liber de Caesaribus*,[73] originate from this wider and more detailed common source.

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[70] Barnes 1976, pp. 258ff.

[71] Noteworthy is the fact that Maximinus had been mentioned previously in the chapter devoted to Alexander Severus (24,3: *Tunc etiam Maximinus regnum arripuit, pluribus de exercitu corruptis*), and is therefore presented as a soldier emperor in the next chapter: *Iulius Maximinus Thrax, ex militaribus, imperavit annos tres* (25,1).

[72] Respectively Aur. Vict. 2,1 and *Epit. Caes.* 2,4.

[73] Festy 1999, pp. XX–XXIV.

In the second section, next to the EKG, the use of the biographies of the emperors is postulated, as from Nerva to Elagabalus, written by Marius Maximus; other possible comparisons can be made with the information from Herodian and Dio Cassius.[74]

For the period that embraces the whole crisis of the III century from Maximinus of Thrace to Carus, alongside the EKG—Marius Maximus being no longer available—our anonymous author could have used an ulterior source, called *Leoquelle*,[75] also compiled during the period of Theodosius with the intention of explaining the crisis of the Empire as being due to the lack of ethics and political role of the senate.

For the period that goes from Diocletian to Gratian, along with the preceding sources, the following might also have had a strong influence: the *Annales* by Virius Nicomachus Flavianus; the *Origo Constatini imperatoris*;[76] the Histories of Ammianus Marcellinus and the Greek tradition of Eunapius-Zosimus.

The almost contemporary source which only the author of the *Epitome*, among the historians here examined, could have had at his disposal for the whole history of the Roman Empire up to the death of Valens (or that of Gratian in 383 or finally of Maximus in 388/389),[77] was the *Annales* that Virius Nicomachus Senior dedicated to Theodosius in the period 389/391, unfortunately not preserved.[78]

The narrative structure of the work, like that identified for Aurelius Victor, differs in the first and second part: for the period that goes from Augustus to Carus the imperial biography with the topical index is used; while, from Diocletian up to Julian the series of biographies is reabsorbed into a historical narration which proceeds chronologically in order to follow the *Augusti* and *Caesars* that reigned in the various periods of the empire; from Jovian the structure for biographies is resumed and goes right up to the panegyric of Theodosius with which the work is concluded.

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[74] Festy 1999, pp. XXV–XXVII.

[75] From the name of Leo Grammaticus in whose *Chronographia* (sec. XI) he is more widely referred to. Cf. Bleckmann 1992.

[76] Barnes 1970, pp. 24–27; Zecchini 1993, pp. 29–38.

[77] A different hypothesis, always presuming that on historian does not write about living emperors, is made by: Baldini 1984, p. 146; Paschoud 1989, p. 98; Schlumberger 1983, p. 324; Zecchini 1993, pp. 56f.

[78] CIL VI 1783; ILS 2948; A.E. 1971, 24; Paschoud 1989, pp. 84–87; Schlumberger 1983, pp. 321–329; Zecchini 1993, pp. 51–60; Festy 1999, p. XVIII.

The last chapter, dedicated to Theodosius, exceeds in length and structure the scheme of the other biographies and is introduced as a panegyric of the emperor. It is balanced between the first part which gives an interwoven historical narration (48,1–7) and the second in which some rhetorical topics are presented, such as the confrontation with Trajan,[79] the physical aspect, his nature, culture and ideal models (48,8–20). It is thought that the themes and the general evaluation go back to the eulogies of Theodosius pronounced by Themistius, Pacatus and Symmachus between 388 and 391.

The work doesn't furnish any explicit information on the life of the author and doesn't contain any direct evaluations or definite stands; it presents a pagan trend, as is quite clearly evident from the silence about Christianity and from the reference to prodigies and oracles,[80] but also from the light in which are placed those emperors who represented key moments of the relationship between tradition and Christianity. Philippus of Arabia and Constantine[81] are negatively judged, while emperors in favour of persecutions such as Decius, Maximinus Daia and Galerius are portrayed in a positive way. Worth mentioning is the sole example of Theodosius, who appears superior even to Trajan. A particular aspect that could be due to a suggestion by the contemporary history is constituted by the detailed recording of the cases of usurpation, a theme of great actuality during the period of Theodosius.

Eutropius is distinguished for the organic unity and equilibrium of his *Breviarium ab Urbe condita*, which deals with the whole history of Rome in ten books, from its foundation to the end of the reign of Jovian in 363 A.D. His success was immediate, as is pointed out in the Greek translation carried out about one decade after the publication by Paianios, a co-disciple of Eutropius in the circle of Acacius and Libanius; at least two other translations into Greek were carried out, one by Capiton of Lycia in the sixth century and another by

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[79] On the confrontation between Theodosius and Trajan cf. Festy 1999, p. XXXVII.

[80] Regarding the ascent to the throne of Trajan (13,10) and the premonitions of the accession of Theodosius to the participants of the plot by Theodorus (48,3), the latter in relation to the aforementioned conspiracy of Theodorus.

[81] The formula with a global picture is given of the reign of Constantine: *decem annis praestantissimus, duodecim insequentibus latro, decem novissimis pupillus ob profusiones immodicas nominatus* (41,16) verified only in the pagan historiography.

a Byzantine reporter of the second half of the eighth century.[82]

There is an appreciation by Symmachus which was used by Jerome, just to mention the contemporaries,[83] and the subsequent use of the *breviarium* by Paulus Orosius.[84] Particular attention therefore deserves to be made to the adaptation and continuation by Paulus Diaconus in his *Historia Romana*, who, in a letter to Adelperga, declared that he had to add to the text of Eutropius all the information concerning Christianity which had been omitted by a pagan author.[85] The presence, either direct or indirect, of Eutropius in medieval Europe can be confirmed by his notoriety in the late Byzantine empire when Nikephoros Gregoras compared Eusebius and Eutropius as sources of opposite religious tendency of the history of the Emperor Constantine.[86]

Two elements of information in his biography have been confirmed: they concern his part in the expedition to Persia under the Emperor Julian in 363 A.D.[87] and the fact that he was *magister memoriae* of the Emperor Valens when he dedicated his work to him in the years 370/371.[88] The first is an explicit piece of information, of which there has never been any reason to doubt. While the second, *Domino Valenti Gothico Maximo Perpetuo Augusto Eutropius v(ir) c(larissimus) magister memoriae*,[89] although appearing in the dedication of the Breviary has been repeatedly subject to doubt. This is because the rank of *vir clarissimus* appeared incongruous with the position of *magister memoriae* and because the latter was mentioned only in one manuscript, the *Bambergensis III 22*, where there are later transcriptions of the explicit of the Breviary of Festus and the incipit of that of Eutropius,

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[82] Paianios translated the work before the end of the year 379 A.D., the year Sapor II died, but who was said to be living in the Greek text (9,24). The translation is contemporaneous with his return to favour at court, after the death of Valens. Cf. Malcovati 1942, pp. 273ff.; Venini 1981, pp. 421ff.; Tribole 1941, p. 128.

[83] Symm. *Epist.* 3,47–50; regarding Jerome, cf. again Helm 1927, pp. 138–170.

[84] Twice Paulus Orosius cites Eutropius (7,11,1; 19,4), but his employment was constant: Cf. Santini 1978, pp. 79–91.

[85] *(Eutropius) utpote vir gentilis in nullo divinae historiae cultusque nostri fecerit mentionem*; cf. Droysen 1879, p. XXVIII; Hellegouarc'h 1999, p. LVII.

[86] Bonamente 1985, p. 260.

[87] Eutr. 10,16,1: *Parthis intulit bellum, cui expeditioni ego quoque interfui.*

[88] *Terminus a quo* of the dedication and also the *cognomen devictarum gentium* attributed to Valens, who became *Gothicus Maximus* in the summer of 369 after the victory over the Visigoths of Athanaricus; cf. Arnaud-Lindet 1994, pp. VIf.

[89] Ruehl 1901; Santini 1979.

from which was derived the hypothesis that the dates pertinent to the career of Festus were re-duplicated and incorrectly attributed also to Eutropius.[90]

The recent setting of the history of the *magisterium memoriae* has not only allowed the verification of the true congruity of the rank of *vir clarissimus*, but it has also clarified the fact that this correspondence took place only in the chronological span in which they worked, in succession, Eutropius and Festus, and in that, from 372 A.D., that position involved the *spectabilitas*.[91]

That Eutropius and Festus had parallel careers becomes a central element in the biographies, which witnessed their rapid succession to the positions of *praeses Ciliciae*, to *magister memoriae* and *proconsul Asiae* and respectively, of *praeses Syriae*, to *magister memoriae* and *proconsul Asiae*.[92] During his term as proconsul in the province of Asia, and more precisely on the eve of his departure from court, Festus appears to have assured the Emperor Valens—in a private interview reported by Libanius in the *Autobiography*—that he had circumstantial news on a plot woven in pagan circles under the guise of the *secundicerius notariorum* Theodorus, to whom the fates had devoted the succession to the imperial throne. Among those suspected of belonging to this conspiracy, which took place in the winter of 371/2, we find, not only Eutropius, but also Ammianus Marcellinus and Libanius, all three of whom were excused. While among the victims enumerated in the trial carried out in Antioch was the Neo-Platonic philosopher Maximus, symbol of the pagan culture in the oriental part of the empire.[93]

The other elements of Eutropius' biography can be reconstructed thanks to the *Autobiography* and to a series of conspicuous letters by Libanius, by the work of Ammianus Marcellinus, some letters by Gregory of Nazianzus and Aurelius Symmachus,[94] as well as by

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[90] H. Droysen 1879, p. 3: *explicit Breviarium ab Urbe condita Festi v.c. magistri memoriae*; Bonamente 1977, pp. 274–297; Müller 1995, p. 3.

[91] *C. Th.* VI 26,2; Spadavecchia 1974/75, p. 103; Bonamente 1977, p. 284; Hellegouarc'h 1999, p. VIII.

[92] Amm. Marc. 29,2,22: *(Festus) administrata Syria, magisterioque memoriae peracto . . . regere Asiam proconsulari potestate exsorsus . . .*; Bird 1986, pp. 11–22; Arnaud-Lindet 1994, p. XXVI.

[93] Lib. *Autob.* 159; cf. Amm. Marc. 29,1,36; 29,2,22; Eunap. *V.S.* 7,6,3; Zosim. 4,15,2; cf. Martroye 1930, pp. 669ff.; Funke 1967, pp. 166ff.; Matthews 1975, pp. 219ff.; Bonamente 1977, p. 173.

numerous epigraphs and juridical texts:[95] it appears he was a nephew and student of a rector of Caesarea in Palestine, Acacius, who was, in turn, strongly tied up with Libanius.[96] Having achieved a solid rhetorical and juridical culture he began a brilliant career in court for a long period that went from Constantius II to Theodosius the Great. During that time he was honoured with the status of principal of the Cilicia (between 367 and 369), of *magister scrinii memoriae* (369/70), of proconsul of Asia (370/71), of prefect of the praetorian for the East (380/81) and of consul in 387.[97] Of pagan culture and conviction, he might have been introduced to the Emperor Julian by Libanius in 361 at Antioch.

His career should not have suffered counterblows from the death of Julian, considering that in 369/370 he was *magister memoriae* of Valens and that in 371 he became governor of the province of Asia with the title of *consularis*; but his ties with pagan personalities certainly involved him in the conspiracy of Theodorus and, although he turned out to be innocent, he lost the governorship to the advantage of his accuser Festus and presumably had to avoid the court environment until the death of Valentinian.[98]

During the reign of Theodosius the career and the prestige of Eutropius had a definite revival indicated by the positions he held, such as prefect of the praetorian for the East in 380/381, which was a crucial moment for imperial foreign politics in the Balkans and above all, as eponymous consul during the reign of the Emperor Valentinian II in 387.[99]

But though he admired Julian and negatively judged Constantine in his work,[100] he administered their magistracies without his personal beliefs, causing him the ill favour of the emperors who car-

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[94] Liban. *Autobiogr.* 159*; Epist.* 289; 754; 755; 979; 1304; 1307; Greg. Naz. *Epist.* 70–71; Symm. *Epist.* 3,47–53. Cf. Pellizzari 1998, 168ff.; 260f.; 290ff.

[95] CIL III 13619–13621; C.I.G 4437; there are more than twenty laws attributed to Eutropius; see list in Bonamente 1977, p. 204, note 122.

[96] The identification in Seeck 1966, p. 151. Note the hypothesis, based on the *De medicamentis* by Marcellus Empiricus (*Praef.* 1–2), according to which Eutropius had received a medical education and was a native of Bordeaux; cf. Matthews 1967, p. 494; 1971, pp. 1074ff.; 1975, pp. 38ff.; 96ff.; Neri 1992, pp. 66ff.

[97] Bonamente 1977, p. 209.

[98] A letter by Symmachus dated 378 appears to provide evidence of the revival of the career of Eutropius: Symm. *Epist.* 3,47; cf. Bonamente 1977, p. 178.

[99] Cf. *P.L.R.E.*, p. 1045; Symm. *Epist.* 3,52.

[100] His pagan beliefs have been a source of doubt for modern scholarship, but it was evident for a Byzantian scholar like Nikeforos Gregoras, who defined him

ried out firm pro-Christian policies: symbolic is the fact that Gregory of Nazianzus turned to him with some familiarity, not forgetting to mention their respective cultural-religious positions.[101]

The *Breviarium ab Urbe condita*[102] describes the entire history of Rome from its foundation up to the death of Jovian in 364 A.D., pausing at the entry to the scene of the ruling emperors Valentinian and Valens, thus reproducing the instigation of Livius both in the title and in the need to introduce a global history of the Roman world.[103]

It has the real structure of pragmatic history, which proceeds chronologically, concentrating on internal and external wars,[104] peace treaties (often with details of the conditions), territorial conquests, happenings of the magistracies, list of triumphs; regarding the imperial age usually the terms of legitimacy for succession are indicated, and also the duration of the reign, the cause of princes' deaths and the funeral ritual. Instead, little attention is devoted to the themes of social and economic character. Two omissions can be considered quite symbolic: the conflict between the plebs and the patricians in the books devoted to the republican age, and the omission of the agrarian matter in the fourth book.[105]

Observing the content of the individual books, the solidity of structure and the evenly distributed development of the narration appears evident, from the moment when, apart from the first book which contains around 360 years of history, the other oscillates between 25 years in the fifth book and 150 in the second. But they don't present the phenomenon of a progressive expansion of the subject as it approaches the contemporary age.[106] From the conciseness of the sentences and the use of current terms we can see the rhetoric

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as: "hostile towards Constantine for the difference in religion, contemporary and fellow-religious of Julian"; cf. Bonamente 1985, pp. 257–272. On the treatment reserved in the *breviarium* for emperors who had carried out a key role—such as Constantine and Julian—cf. Bonamente 1978, p. 59; 1986, pp. 174ff.; Neri 1992, pp. 136f.

[101] Gregory explicitly says "your Homer" in *Epist.* 71,5. A balanced test of the literature in Hellegouarc'h 1999, pp. XXXVIIIf.

[102] In the form *Breviarium ab Urbe condita* the title is obtained from the Ms *Gothanus 101* and, by instigation of Mommsen, it has been used since the Hartel edition of 1872; cf. Santini 1979, p. XVII.

[103] Capozza 1973, p. 105; Hellegouarc'h 1994, 173; 1999, XIIff.: with a convincing recall to the steady presence of the epitomising tradition of Livius.

[104] Den Boer 1972, p. 138.

[105] Hellegouarc'h 1999, pp. XLIIIf.

[106] Müller's scheme 1995, p. 8.

style which imposed linearity of procedure and adherence to the facts on historical compendia, in such a way as to pursue an apparent simplicity; but it is there that we can also recognise the attitude of the writer who opts for the standard formula in order to avoid misconceptions. Eutropius's principal characteristic is his didactic ability, with presentations of historical and geographical abridgements,[107] which might derive from the praxis of school education or from the opportunity to offer the emperor and his court a history of Rome easy to understand and to remember.

The historical lay-out is articulated in the following way:

1 –	From the foundation to the pillage of Brennus (390 B.C.)	365 years
2 –	From Camillus to the end of the first Punic war (241 B.C.)	150 years
3 –	From the embassy of Ptolemy III to the end of the second Punic war (201 B.C.)	40 years
4 –	From the second Macedonian war to the death of Iugurtha (105 B.C.)[108]	about 100 years
5 –	From the war against Cimbri and Teutones to the dictatorship of Sulla (79 B.C.)	26 years
6 –	From the war of Sertorius to the Ides of March (44 B.C.)	34 years
7 –	From Augustus to Domitian (96 A.D.)	140 years
8 –	From Nerva to Severus Alexander (235 A.D.)	139 years
9 –	From Maximinus to Diocletian (305 A.D.)	70 years
10 –	From the second tetrarchy to Jovian (364 A.D.)	59 years

[107] As an example of the care taken with the dating we can consider 1,1,2: *urbem exiguam in Palatino monte constituit XI Kal. Maias, Olympiadis sextae anno tertio, post Troiae excidium, ut qui plurimum minimumque tradunt, anno trecentesimo nonagesimo quarto*; on the chronological system, see also Den Boer 1972, pp. 124–137. The indications of the distance from Rome are also recurrent: cf. Den Boer 1972, pp. 120–124; Santini 1979, p. 8; Walter 1988, pp. 549–553.

[108] In fact, Eutropius does not mention social problems from the Gracchi to Livius Drusus; cf. Den Boer 1968, p. 166.

Certainly the events of Roman history were the common patrimony of historiography and of the scholastic handbook and as such they might have been made available to Eutropius from what we like to define as *Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte*, from which traces are found as much in the work of Aurelius Victor as in that of Festus, in the *Chronicon of Jerome* and in the *Historia Augusta*. For the first six books Eutropius used the tradition of Livius, almost certainly through an epitome;[109] for the seventh, while adopting the periodisation and themes present in the tradition of Suetonius, it is thought that he must have had access to the EK;[110] for the following books his presentation will have found a model in the EK which gave him the idea of a biographic narrative register for the period of Augustus to Carus, and presumably, also the return to the procedure of chronological development starting from the first tetrarchy. All that remains to be known is if, while having access to the EK, he had access to one or more sources—among which the Aurelius Victor's *Caesares*[111] where the subject was organised for index books almost reduced to a chronological structure, more similar in fact to a chronograph than a real historical narration.[112]

On the basis of the content and the sources used, a division of the work can be made into three parts: the republican age, the Julio-Claudian and the Flavian dynasties and the remaining imperial age, a partition articulated by the dominant presence of the Suetonius tradition, eventually *auctus*.[113] But it is also evident that in Eutropius' opinion, Julius Caesar represented the negative conclusion to the republican age while the imperial age started with Augustus (*Nullo tempore ante eum magis Romana res floruit*).[114] It is not to Augustus, however, that the historiographic seal of the turning point of an age is attributed, in that the beginning of the seventh book does not open under the ensign of Augustus: it opens under that of the *iunctura*

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[109] Mazzarino 1966, pp. 327f.; Capozza 1973, p. 7.
[110] Müller 1995, p. 10; Ratti 1996, p. 186.
[111] For a systematic examination of the meeting points of Eutropius with Aurelius Victor on the most persistent theme, that of the definition of the figure of Constantine, see Neri 1992, pp. 3ff., with an analysis of the bibliography in a perspective which usually encounters the comparisons between all the historians of the fourth century and in a particular way the method of employing the EKG.
[112] Cf. Hellegouarc'h 1999, pp. XXIVff.
[113] Hellegouarc'h 1999, p. XXII.
[114] Eutrop. 7,9.

set-up after the murder of Caesar and the resumption of the civil war, in turn given importance both by the reckoning of the intervening years from the foundation of the city and from the emphasis with which the contrast between the senate and Anthony is clearly outlined.[115]

There are some specific passages from Eutropius, present with constancy and coherence in the *breviarium*, which bear the imprint of his personality:[116] one of the most remarkable consists of the constant reference to the political ideal of the senate, seen as an institution that characterises the republican age and that remains as a touchstone for the principles of the imperial age;[117] from this perspective the Eutropian concept of *civilitas*[118] assumes a specific meaning, a complex of ethical and political attitudes with precise institutional reflexes, to which only a senator of the fourth century who admired the tradition of Rome and knew Julian the Apostate's attempts at restoration (*civilis in cunctos*)[119] could have given a convincing interpretation.

The *civilitas* in fact has its anchor in the republican tradition, where all the senators are equal with each other, thanks to the annual duration of their position,[120] and are therefore safe from the *insolentia* that led Julius Caesar to his death (*agere insolentius coepit et contra consuetudinem Romanae libertatis*) and which marked the worst epoch of Constantine (*verum insolentia rerum secundarum aliquantum Constantinum ex illa favorabili animi docilitate mutavit*).[121] One of the rare deviations that Eutropius allows himself is in fact dedicated to the *civilitas* of Trajan, whose nature and values are formulated in an epigrammatic way: *Inter alia dicta hoc ipsius fertur egregium. Amicis enim culpantibus quod nimium circa omnes communis esset, respondit talem se imperatorem esse privatis, quales esse sibi imperatores privatus optasset* (8,5,1).

Also the constant attention to a theme such as that of the emperor's

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[115] Eutrop. 7,1: *Anno urbis septingentesimo fere ac nono, interfecto Caesare, civilia bella reparata sunt. Percussoribus enim Caesaris senatus favebat. Antonius cunsul partium Caesaris civilibus bellis opprimere eos conabatur.* Cf. Scivoletto 1970, pp. 32f.

[116] Cf. Den Boer 1972, pp. 119ff.

[117] Cf. Bird 1987, pp. 63ff.; Hellegouarc'h 1999, pp. XXXIIff.

[118] Scivoletto 1970, passim; pp. 23ff. (The specific use of the term is indicated by Eutropius). Cf. Bonamente 1986, pp. 168ff.; Ratti 1996, pp. 187ff.; Hellegouarc'h 1999, pp. XXXVIf.

[119] Eutr. 10,16,3; Bonamente 1986, pp. 164f.

[120] Eutr. 1,9,2: *placuit . . . ne [consules] per diuturnitatem potestatis insolentiores redderentur, sed civiles semper essent, qui se post annum scirent futuros esse privatos.*

[121] Eutr. 6,25; 10,6,3. Den Boer 1968, p. 270; Neri 1992, pp. 101ff.

relatio in numerum divorum is a characteristic that Eutropius shares with the later *Historia Augusta*, the only work where the theme resorts systematically and even with great attention towards the aspects of the rituals and the motivations of the senatorial decrees which conferred the deification. In the second half of the fourth century A.D., the institute of the *consecratio* offered an occasion for the comparison of ideals and culture, both for its re-proposing the function brought to an end by the senate in conferring such acknowledgement, as evidenced by Eusebius and John Chrysostom,[122] and also because it was an important element of the religious tradition and the very same conception of imperial power.[123] It is one of Eutropius' characteristics to have always pointed out the consecration of the princes with a fixed formula that reproduced the senatorial decree.[124]

The style and lexicon of Eutropius are a constant characteristic of his work, in such a way as to create an image of the author: going from the reflexes of the juridical language, with locutions similar to those of the *Codex Theodosianus*, natural for a cultured dignitary, who pursued his own career thanks to his juridical culture, to the care given to the chronological references and to moving on finally to the precision with which the formal aspect of treaties is presented, concerning the accession to the throne or the same imperial apotheosis: they are all individual characteristics of the praxis of the official documents and the court protocol. The recurrent use of modal verbs[125] to overshadow the intentionality and the preference for the parataxis, the use of subjunctive participles both in the present and the passed and finally the tendency to use the impersonal passive are all considered distinctive elements of Eutropius' style.

However, there is a tendency to distinguish a first part, up to the sixth book, characterised by a parataxis syntax and by the tendency to enumerate, and a second, starting from the epoch of Caesar and during the whole imperial age, where, due also to the biographical

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[122] Euseb. *HE* 2,2,2; Johann. Chrys. *Hom. XXVI* (*PG* 61,7,581).

[123] Den Boer 1968, pp. 273f.; Bonamente 1989, pp. 19–73; ibid. 1994, pp. 137–164; Schumacher 1995, pp. 105ff.

[124] On the official terminology, cf. W. Kierdorf 1986, pp. 43ff. On the references by Eutropius, cf. Den Boer 1968, pp. 273ff.; Den Boer 1972, pp. 152–158 (with a precise analysis of the terminology and in particular the use of *merere* in administrative language).

[125] A list from Santini 1979, p. 11.

structure of the exposition, the narration and the presentation become wider and more articulate.[126]

It must also be said that the narrative structure and the lexicon of the *breviarium* have been thought compatible due to the fact that the original language used by the author must have been Syrian or Greek: however, traces of them are scanty and can be gathered in two explicit references to Greek technical terms, while no convincing signs have been identified of a preference for cities and locations of the oriental part of the Empire.[127]

From the dedication of the *brevarium* we can draw a series of indications that must be de-coded according to their topical formulation, but which correspond to an aim certainly pursued by the breviary. Firstly, the historical memory is a point of confrontation for the political praxis: it is just as the author confirms when he reassures the emperor that he has already carried out the illustrious examples of antiquity in his government (*Praef.: Res Romanas . . . brevi narratione collegi . . . ut tranquillitatis tuae possit mens divina laetari prius se inlustrium virorum facta in administrando imperio secutam quam cognosceret lectione*). Secondly, he identified the central role of the *Res Romanae* (*Romanum Imperium* in 1,1,1) in the *negotia vel bellica vel civilia,* keeping to the pragmatic dimension of Greek and Roman historiography, from which he gets that firmness which is a peculiar characteristic of his the work. This is also true for the imperial period where the biographical dimension is a constitutive component (*strictim additis etiam his, quae in principum vita egregia extiterunt*).[128]

The work of Festus is more strongly marked by a particular circumstance, that of presenting the Emperor Valens, already busy in the war against the Persians, with a synthetic progress report on the territorial conquests of Rome, with particular reference to the oriental border.

While sharing with other compendium writers the need to cover the whole chronological reach of the history of Rome, he however developed a specific subject, which involved the reduction in an abridged edition of a theme already outlined as that of the expan-

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[126] Santini 1979, p. 10; Hellegouarc'h 1999, p. L.

[127] Reference to Greek terms in Eutr. 8,10,3; 10,8,2. Cf. Schmeck 1950, pp. 440ff.; Capozza 1973, p. 95, nota 125; Hellegouarc'h 1999, p. XXXI.

[128] Eutr. *Praef.*; cf. Galdi 1922, pp. 229ff.

sion of the borders of the Roman Empire. In the incipit of some manuscripts (*Breviarium Festi de breviario rerum gestarum populi Romani*)[129] there are visible traces of the awareness that something must have been reduced that was already in a brief form, as, after all, it was said to the emperor: *Accipe ergo, quod breviter dictis brevius conputetur: ut annos et aetatem rei publicae ac praeteriti facta temporis non tam legere tibi, gloriosissime princeps, quam numerare videaris*;[130] but the title was reconstructed by the publishers in the authentic form *De breviario rerum gestarum populi Romaani* according to *Ms Gothanus*.[131]

This perspective of actuality confers an organic unity to the work which a list of the roman conquests, with a few lines dedicated to the individual wars and provinces, would certainly not have had. The incumbent presence of the Persian power in the oriental provinces and the diffused perception that Valens had no intention of going any further than with an honourable agreement, caused Festus to repeatedly choose—both for events pertaining to the past and above all for the more recent emperors, among which Constantine and Julian—the most consistent version relative to the contemporary situation and perspectives, even regarding the emperor's plans which he declared he knew about (*scio nunc, inclyte princeps, quo tua pergat intentio*).[132]

In this sense it is worth noting the coherence between the precise formulation of the liberty in which a *palma pacis* is pointed to for the emperor after the victory over the Goths, and the interpretation given, in the respective chapters, of the politics of Constantine and of Julian's expedition.[133] In the first case, while bearing in mind in accordance with the other sources that Constantine had planned and prepared an expedition against Persia before dying, Festus stresses the fact that the Persians had asked for peace at one of the embassies, clearly showing the direction that Valens was already taking:[134] the evaluation of Julian's expedition appears even more evident, as it constituted an immediate urgency that the emperor had to face; it

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[129] Ms. *Escorial.* R.II.18; Paris 61113a; *Bamberg.* E.III.22.

[130] Fest. 1,1; cf. Den Boer 1972, pp. 173f.

[131] Eadie 1967, p. 14; Arnaud-Lindet 1994, pp. XVf., both with an investigated study.

[132] Fest. 15.

[133] Fest. 26 (about Constantine): *Sub cuius adventu Babyloniae in tantum regna trepidarunt, ut supplex ad eum Persarum legatio adcurreret, facturos se imperata promitterent . . .*; 28,1 (about Julian).

[134] Neri 1992, pp. 145ff.

results not only in a negative evaluation of the behaviour of Julian, but also in a polemic answer to that which Eutropius had published in court only a few months previously—*Iuliano in externos hostes expertae felicitatis principi adversum Persas modus defuit.*[135]

The interwoven careers of Festus and Eutropius, which finds their nodal point in the succession of Festus to Eutropius as the proconsul of Asia during the year 371, is coherent with that written in his *breviarium*, dedicated to the Emperor Valens after the victory over the Goths and while the war against the Persians was still in progress:[136] the precise period goes from the early part of 370 to the later half of 371 A.D.[137]

His biography has been reconstructed primarily on the information from Ammianus Marcellinus, from Libanius and from Eunapius which finds confirmation in the epigraphic texts sent to him by Valens while he was proconsul in Asia. We know that he was native of Trient and of humble birth.[138] We have reliable information regarding some periods of his career: *praeses Syriae* in 365 or in 369; *magister memoriae* between 366 and 371; *proconsul Asiae* from 372 to 378.[139]

Libanius, together with Ammianus Marcellinus and Eunapius, had strong hostile feelings towards Festus, due to the trials connected to the conspiracy of Theodorus. These give us an insight into his merciless action during the judicial repression of the conspiracy and even into the date of his death, December 30, 379, during a visit to the

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[135] Fest. 28. Eutropius' valuation is totally different. 10,16: *(Iulianus) Partis intulit bellum . . . remeansque victor, dum se inconsultius proeliis inserit, hostili manu interfectus est.* Cf. Eadie 1967, p. 16; Bonamente 1986, pp. 91–127; on another fundamental testimony such as the *Epitaph* written by Libanius, see also Angiolani 2000, p. 95 ss.

[136] Fest. 30: *ut ad hanc ingentem de Gothis etiam Babiloniae palma pacis accedat.*

[137] As *terminus post quem non* the non-mention of the province *Valeria* in Britain, won in 369 A.D., was indicated: *in Brittania (sunt provinciae) Maxima Caesarensis, Flavia Caesarensis, Brittania prima, Brittania secunda* (Fest. 6). Cf. *Not. Dign. Occ.* I, 118–121; Den Boer, 1972, pp. 173ff.; Eadie, 1967, p. 1.

[138] Amm. Marc. 29,2,22: *Festus quidam Tridentinus ultimi sanguinis et ignoti . . . administrata Syria magisterioque memoriae peracto . . . regere Asiam proconsulari potestate exorsus.* The fact that Ammianus Marcellinus describes Festus as a humble parvenu leads to the exclusion of his connection with Rufius Festus Avienus, who was of noble descent; cf. Eadie 1967, pp. 4–9; Arnaud-Lindet 1994, pp. Xff.; Cameron 1995, pp. 252ff.

[139] The rank of proconsul of Festus can be dated according to a decree by Valentinian, Valens and Gratian of April 25, 372 (*C. Th.* 15,5,1), recorded on an epigraph discovered in Efesus (*A.E.* 1906, 31), verified in the chronology of the plot by Theodorus and was therefore extended up to the first months of the reign of Theodosius: Cf. Eunap. *Vitae sophist.*, 7,6,3; Malcus 1970, p. 531; Bonamente 1977, pp. 174f.

temple of the goddesses Nemesis, where he is said to have gone pursued by remorse for his cruelty.

This circumstance emphasises the problem, for a long time untouched, of Festus' adhesion, or not, to paganism, deriving from the fact that Eunapius attributes him with having declared his non-veneration of the gods, and thus pointing out his motives for persecuting the pagans (namely those involved in the conspiracy of Theodorus).[140] With respect to this, it has been repeatedly observed that, at the conclusion of the work, the author himself seems to clearly distinguish his own *religio* from that of the emperor.[141] But this declaration must be compared with more circumstantial information given by the very same Eunapius, who reports in great detail that Festus, subsequently fallen into disgrace after the *fasti* of his career under Valens and afflicted with remorse, is said to have gone to the temple of the goddesses Nemesis. There he is supposed to have revealed to his friends the visions that tormented him and cried over his faults and begged pardon, but died unexpectedly on the spot, demonstrating an example of the gods' providential action.[142]

The work of Festus is composed of thirty brief chapters with which the territorial conquests of Rome, from the regal period to Jovian, are outlined; they can be divided into four sections:

I	– chapters 1–3:	Dedication, criteria of composition, chronological schemes, stages of the Roman expansion in the three ages, regal, republican and imperial.
II	– chapters 4–9:	Conquest of the western provinces including the Balkans.[143]
III	– chapters 10–14:	Conquest of the oriental provinces commencing from Asia.

[140] Eunap. *Vitae sophist.* 7,6,12.

[141] Fest. 30: . . . *maneat modo concessa dei nutu et ab amico, cui credis et creditus es, numine indulta felicitas* . . .; cf. Momigliano 1963, p. 95; Den Boer 1968, pp. 278f.; Eadie 1967, p. 9; Bonamente 1977, pp. 293f.; Arnaud-Lindet 1994, pp. Xff.; Paschoud, Zosime II,2, p. 362.

[142] Eunap. *Vitae sophist.* 7,6,13; cf. Amm. Marc. 29,2,22; Den Boer 1972, p. 180 (concluding that the historian cannot be the persecutor of the philosophers).

[143] The provinces are grouped according to the organisation of the diocese contemporary to the author: Africa (chapter 4), Spain (5), Gaul and Britannia (6), Illyria and Macedonia (8) and Thrace (9). It must be noted that Festus did not think it opportune to mention the contemporary administrative organisation of Italy. Cf. appendix "The provincial Lists" in Eadie 1967, pp. 154–171.

IV – chapters 15–30: Roman wars with the Parthi from Sulla to Jovian. Conclusion.

The work presents clear divisions in the three initial chapters, composed almost exclusively of calculations and schemes, evidently inferred from the traditional schooling, with which the author wanted to recall the idea of the unity of Roman history. It therefore begins with the two principal themes, the history of the territorial conquests of Rome and that of the wars sustained against the irreducible enemy, the Parthi and the Persians, often designated by the general name of *Babylonia.*

The various divisions are marked with considerations or diversions, as, for example, at the beginning of the 10th chapter where the eastern and western provinces are indicated, there is a direct address to the emperor indicating his specific field of action and highlighting the hereditary laws that the Romans boasted following the donation by Attalus.[144] Another example is at the beginning of the 15th chapter, where, prior to presenting the various wars, the author again directs himself in a direct manner to the emperor to explicitly assure him of the superiority of the Romans: *Furto hostes in paucis invenies esse laetatos, vera autem virtute semper Romanos extitisse victores.*

The structure of the work is clearly distinguished from that of Aurelius Victor and of Eutropius, in that it finds its unity and significance in the outline of the historiographic scenes of the expedition of Valens, in two distinct shots—one could say using a wide angle in chapters 9 to 14 and with a direct aim in chapters 15 to 29. In this last part, however, he doesn't write a military history in a proper sense but a pragmatic history, for which in fact he used the same sources as the other two authors and in particular a Livian epitome for the introductory section (chaps. 1 to 3) and for those chapters that deal with the regal and republican period;[145] for the remaining sections the common tradition of the EKG is evident, with the presumed input of ideas from the Suetonius tradition for the first imperial age. Besides, numerous errors have been observed

[144] Fest. 10: *Nunc Eoas partes totumque Orientem . . . qui auctores sceptris tuis paraverint, explicabo . . . Asia societate Attali regis nota Romanis est eamque Attali testamento relictam hereditario iure possedimus.*

[145] Eutropius' chronology can be over-lapped with that of Festus and therefore returning to a single source. Cf. Den Boer 1968, p. 277.

caused by the hasty summarizing of the sources, as in the case of the victory over Hieron attributed to Marcellus or of the narration of the retreat of Jovian from Persia.[146]

A further item of interest in the *breviarium* of Festus is constituted, besides the information he reports on the history of the various provinces (for which he had no borders of originality and doesn't usually know more than the other historians of EKG tradition), by the fact that he captured brief historical information about the provinces according to the organisation of the diocese which was for him contemporary, a circumstance that ends up as a valid element of comparison with the official lists such as the *Laterculus Veronensis*, the *Notitia Galliarum*, the *Laterculus* of Polemius Silvius and the *Notitia dignitatum*. The convergence of two circumstances, firstly, that Festus was *magister memoriae* and had at his disposition the official documents, and secondly, the certainty of the date of editing, 369/370, increases the authoritativeness of the *breviarium* relative to the administration of the empire in the fourth century.[147]

To take an overview of the four minor brief works of historiography of the fourth century, one must certainly acknowledge that they have as a common characteristic the fact that they selected, in a more or less drastic way, the material available to them in order to carry out an assignment and to present their own personal ideal for their era: this is the first sign of their originality and of the intellectual vigour of the respective authors.[148] On the other hand, they are limited in structure, perspective, and narrative originality for which modern doctrine unanimously and legitimately denounces them, having put them through the severe examination of the *Quellenforschung*.

Apart from sharing the specific dimension of an *otium* which becomes a task due to the pressure of the solicitations, we can highlight at least three themes on which the *breviari* find a meeting point: the importance of the senate in the history of Rome, the role of the *religio* and that of the culture and finally the defence of the frontiers of the empire.

The reflection on the role and prestige of the senate as an institution and as a mentality had a specific actuality, around the middle of

[146] Eadie 1967, pp. 17f.
[147] An analytic valuation in Eadie 1967, Appendix, pp. 154ff.
[148] Den Boer 1968, p. 255.

the fourth century, when the senate was radically transformed by the administrative reforms begun by Diocletian and completed by Constantius II. Two interesting points can be noted: on the one hand the task given to Themistius to superintend an ample *lectio* of the senate in Constantinople after his crowning achievement of a comparison task in Rome; and on the other hand, the concurrent removal of the altar of Victoria, built in Rome during the visit of Constantius II in 357 A.D.[149] In fact, the central theme of all the *breviarium* authors, including the author of the *Epitome*, rotates around the idea that the senate reflects the state of affairs of the institutional, political and cultural life of the empire.

Also the rapid and violent overshadowing of the traditional religion, whose elimination Constantius II had allowed, was another confrontation point with the tradition. Meanwhile the emperors were carrying out during the last few decades the traditional functions of *pontifex maximus* also with regards to Christianity. Our historians have followed a line which respects the routine of a literary kind, but did not leave room for doubt to the reader, who had to know, especially if at court, the convulsive politics of intervention with the controversies between Christians.

The strongest convergence and the most diffused attention concerned, however, the central function practised by the cultural environment in the Roman world both as a store of *exempla* and therefore of values and as a *condicio sine qua non* of the correct exercise of power. This theme had assumed new and controversial connotations, as is pointed out in a symbolic way in as much of the cultural revival of the Roman senate as of the comparison between Libanius and Themistius on the function of the rhetor: this theme is also highlighted in the works examined, even though there is an inclination to update it.

Finally, the problem of defending the frontiers, which around the second half of the fourth century was balanced between the necessity to protect the Rhine border and the need to oppose the attacks of the Persians, is again referred to in this historiography in the consolidated forms of the Roman/Barbaric relationship and the topos of the *felicitas* of the emperors in the *bella externa*, typical of a world which did not yet know the irretrievable defeat of Adrianople.

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[149] Fraschetti 1999, pp. 53ff.

Although it is not easy to reduce to a common denominator works that are entwined in a chronological arc of around fifty years—from the final years of Constantius II to after Theodosius—we can conclude that they also express in their heterogeneity the renewal of the function of the *historìa* in the fourth century. At this time the dramatic discussion of tradition provoked an intense return to the *vetustas,* as much by those who considered it *adoranda* and therefore a source of unchangeable models as by those who set about employing it in a new system of values. In this picture some representatives of the new governing class, such as Aurelius Victor, Eutropius and Festus, have given a valid assay of their knowledge of the institutional and cultural roots of the empire.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE HISTORIA AUGUSTA AND PAGAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

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The Scholiast on Juvenal, writing in the later fourth century,[1] registers (on Juv. 4.53) the condemnation of the *delator* Palfurius Sura after the death of Domitian, and names three others, *sicut Marius Maximus scribit.* Ammianus, in his second diatribe on the *mores* of the Eternal City, comments sarcastically on the cultural deficiencies of the aristocracy. He had already written of their frivolous interests, singers and actors rather than philosophers and orators, and of their libraries, closed for ever like tombs (14.6.18). Now, he notes, "some of them, while hating learning like poison, read Juvenal and Marius Maximus with particular eagerness, turning over no volumes but these in their profound leisure—the reason for this is not a matter for my humble judgement". Considering their claims to glory and noble ancestry, he thought they should read a great deal (28.4.14–15).[2]

These mentions apart, Maximus' writings are known only from the *Historia Augusta* (hereafter HA): biographies of emperors, their heirs, and usurpers from Hadrian to the sons of Carus.[3] The HA quotes Maximus' *vitae* of Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Pertinax, Severus, and Elagabalus. It has one general citation, "as Marius Maximus says in the life of many [sc.

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[1] The terminus post quem is the prefecture of Naeratius Cerialis, A.D. 352–3 (*PLRE* I *Cerealis* 2), referred to on 10.24.

[2] Ammianus exaggerates: some aristocrats knew the classics, cf. Macrobius; or Holy Scripture, cf. Jerome.

[3] In the oldest manuscript the work is called *vitae diversorum principum et tyrannorum a divo Hadriano usque ad Numerianum diversis conpositi (sic)*. It was first called 'HA' by its great editor Isaac Casaubon, inspired by the reference in *Tac.* 10.3 to the historian (allegedly the emperor Tacitus' ancestor) as *scriptorem historiae Augustae*: Hohl, *S.H.A.* VII n. 1; Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* (1994) Xf. Callu, BHAC 1982/'83 (1985) 119ff., discusses the *Vita cesaru(m) v(e)l tira(n)noru(m) ab helio adriano us(que) ad Car(um) carinu(m) libri VII* in the Murbach library catalogue. References to HA lives are abbreviated as in Hohl, *S.H.A.* XV.

emperors]" (*AS* 21.4), and two comments. First, Maximus was one of those biographers who transmitted accurate information although not writing *diserte*, in the historians' high style (*Pr.* 2.6–7). But then he is castigated as long-winded (*homo omnium verbosissimus*), unlike Suetonius, who loved brevity—and because he *mythistoricis se voluminibus implicavit* (*Q* 1.1–2). Maximus' verbosity had already been exemplifed: he devoted two *libri* to his *vita Marci* (*AC* 9.5), even more to his *vita Severi* (*G* 2.1), and included extensive documents. One was taken over verbatim (*C* 18.1–20.5), others omitted as too lengthy (*P* 2.6–9, 15.8). As the Scholiast presumably quoted Maximus' *vita Nervae*, Maximus is taken to have continued Suetonius' *Caesars*, covering Domitian's successors down to Elagabalus. He should be the HA's source for the many authentic names and other details on this period, their accuracy confirmed by epigraphy and by comparison e.g. with Cassius Dio.[4]

It is easy to understand Juvenal's appeal in Theodosian Rome. Perhaps Marius Maximus satisfied the same taste, for scandal and trivia. Besides, the Antonines, the essential subject of Maximus' *vitae*, were greatly in vogue. The Spanish emperor was hailed not only as Trajan's fellow-countryman, supposed to resemble Trajan physically and (negative aspects excepted) in the character of his rule, but actually as a descendant.[5] Further, the aristocracy vaunted descent, not only, in a few cases, from the republican nobility (Fabii, Valerii, Scipios, and Gracchi),[6] but, many more, from the Antonine and Severan élite.[7] Descendants of Maximus' own family were perhaps connected to the Nicomachi Flaviani, which may help to explain

[4] Birley, ANRW II.34.3 (1997) 2678ff., on Maximus (and on differing views on the source of the HA's 'factual' information down to A.D. 222). Barnes, *Sources* (1978), updated id., HAC n.s. III 1992 (1995) 1ff., requires modification in the light of new work on the *Kaisergeschichte* and the *Annales* of Flavianus, discussed briefly below.

[5] Cf. e.g. Themistius, *Or.* 15.8, 204B–205B; 19.4, 229B–C; 19.8–9, 231D–232D; 34.7; Claudian, *De IV cons. Honorii* 18ff.; *Epit. de Caes.* 48.1, 8ff. Cf. Hartke, *Römische Kinderkaiser* (1951) 324ff.; Syme, *Emperors & Biography* (1971) 101ff.; Schlumberger, *Epitome* (1974) 230ff.; Chausson, HAC n.s. VI (1998) 105ff.

[6] Note Jerome, *Epp.* 108.1: *Gracchorum stirps, suboles Scipionum, Pauli heres, cuius vocabulum trahit, Maeciae Papiriae, matris Africani, vera et germana progenies*; 54.1, 4 (Camillus and the Gracchi); 107.2 (Gracchi); 77.3 (Fabii). For Valerii, the name Publicola, ib. 39.5, cf. *PLRE* I *Publicola* 1–2, indicates the claim. Syme, *Ammianus and the HA* (1968), esp. 162ff., treats these genealogical claims as fiction. Chausson, in various papers (cf. next note and Bibliography), takes them more seriously.

[7] Chausson, *Cahiers Glotz* 7 (1996) 319ff., and *Journal des Savants* 1997, 211ff., supplies copious examples.

why his *vitae* had been transmitted.[8] These people would have enjoyed reading about their own ancestors. Shortly before his acid comment on Juvenal and Maximus, indeed, Ammianus makes derogatory remarks about the nobility's pride in their imposing names (28.4.7).[9]

Maximus was exploited by at least one other writer, the existence of whose lost history, labelled the *Kaisergeschichte* (hereafter KG), was first detected in 1883 by Enmann as the source for several fourth century works, notably Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, and Jerome's continuation of Eusebius' *Chronicle*. The author of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, writing soon after Theodosius' death, was likewise indebted to the KG—but via a source that had also used Maximus at first hand.[10] Subsequently, Polemius Silvius used the KG for his *Laterculus*: as Burgess points out, the KG had given special attention to *tyranni*, usurpers. Further, Burgess shows that the KG was not completed until c. 357 and he can even offer 'a local habitation and a name' for its author: Eusebius Nanneticus (of Nantes), used by Ausonius (according to a medieval library catalogue) as the basis for verses (now lost) on usurpers between Decius and Diocletian.[11]

In the last decades of the fourth century there were two further—more substantial—pagan Latin historians: Virius Nicomachus Flavianus and Ammianus. Flavianus "dedicated his *Annales* to Theodosius, whose quaestor and prefect he was, at the emperor's wish"; and was called *historicus disertissimus* by the husband of his granddaughter.[12] The chronology of Flavianus' career is debatable; but it is plausible that he became *quaestor intra palatium* after Theodosius' victory over Magnus

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[8] Chausson, *Journal des Savants*, esp. 307f. with n. 153.

[9] The text is corrupt. Emendation produces *prae <ceteris> nominum claritudine conspicui quidam, ut putant, in immensum semet tollunt, cum Reburri* [? = *Probi*] *et Faltonii et Ragonii Ceioniique appellentur Albini cum Tarraciis* [or: *Pamac(h)iis*?] *et Vitrasiis aliisque ita decens sonantibus originum insignibus multis*: Birley, HAC n.s. III 1992 (1995) 58ff., and ANRW II.34.3 (1997) 2681. Approved by Barnes, *Ammianus* (1998) 206ff., to whom the emendation *prae <ceteris> nominum* is owed.

[10] Schlumberger, *Epitome*, esp. 128ff.

[11] Burgess, *Class Quart* 43 (1993) 491ff.; id., *Class Phil* 90 (1995) 111ff.; HAC n.s. VI 1996 (1998) 83ff. Eusebius is named in a list of Ausonius' writings compiled at Verona soon after 1320 by Giovanni Mansionario; first brought to scholarly notice in 1971 by R. Weiss, in R.R. Bolgar (ed.), *Classical Influences on European Culture A.D. 500–1500* (Cambridge, 1971), 67ff. Cf. Burgess' first paper here cited, 495ff., with further references; Paschoud, *Vies d'Aurélien, Tacite* (1996) XXXVIIf.

[12] *CIL* VI 1783 = *ILS* 2948 (below, n. 14); set up by his grandson; *CIL* VI 1782 = *ILS* 2947. The dedicator of the latter inscription, son of the orator Symmachus, married the elder Flavianus' granddaughter in A.D. 401, *PLRE* II *Symmachus* 12.

Maximus in 388 and was invited to dedicate his *Annales* to the emperor soon afterwards.[13] That he wrote *Annales* is known only from an inscription set up thirty-seven years after his suicide in September 394;[14] they are nowhere explicitly cited; and there is no agreement as to whether they covered Republican or imperial history (or both).[15]

Schlumberger, following a lead by Hartke, argued persuasively that Flavianus' *Annales* were used by the author of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*. Not all were convinced.[16] But Bleckmann has shown that Zonaras relied, for the period after Cassius Dio's *History* ends (A.D. 229) until well into the fourth century, principally on a writer identifiable as Peter the Patrician (*magister officiorum* under Justinian), and that Peter himself must have used a Latin, pagan history for the period post-229, perhaps precisely Flavianus' *Annales*.[17] Bleckmann has now reinforced this case.[18] Signs had already been detected of Zosimus' source for the fourth century, Eunapius, having used a—certainly pagan—Latin historian. Paschoud demonstrated that the story of Gratian's refusal of the pontifical robe and the response (a *vaticinium post eventum*) prophesying his overthrow by Magnus Maximus, could only have been composed in Latin.[19] Whether Flavianus could have dedicated a work including this story to the most Christian emperor Theodosius, might seem doubtful. Still, Theodosius' attitude to the house of Valentinian was not entirely positive. Further, the historian could have gained favour with laudatory accounts of the elder Theodosius' deeds in Britain and Africa. Flavianus' service as *vicarius* in Africa, shortly after the general's sudden execution there, would

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[13] See on the quaestorship J.F. Matthews, in Honoré, *Virius Nicomachus Flavianus* (1989) 18ff. On Flavianus' father and family, see now Chausson, *Antiquité Tardive* 4 (1996) 245ff.

[14] *CIL* VI 1783 = *ILS* 2948, lines 19–21: *cuius* (sc. *Theodosii*) *in eum effusa benivolentia et usq(ue) ad annalium, quos consecrari sibi a quaestore et praefecto suo voluit, provecta, excitavit livorem inproborum.*

[15] Zecchini, *Ricerche* (1993) 57ff., argues that the *Annales* covered both Republic and Empire. See now Bleckmann, *Historia* 44 (1995) 83ff.; Festy, ib. 46 (1997) 465ff.; Ratti, ib. 46 (1997) 479ff. Precisely when Flavianus wrote (and whether he produced a second edition) remains conjectural.

[16] Hartke, *Geschichte* (1940) 74ff., and *Kinderkaiser* 330ff.; Schlumberger, *Epitome*, esp. 240ff., and, replying to critics, BHAC 1982/'83 (1985) 305ff.

[17] Bleckmann, *Die Reichskrise* (1992), esp. 396ff. (cautious but convincing). Among other results, he showed that the Anonymus post Dionem is identical with Peter. For enthusiastic approval, Paschoud, *Antiquité Tardive* 2 (1994) 71ff.; cf. id., *Aurélien* . . . XLIIff. and *Symbolae Osloenses* 73 (1998) 80ff.

[18] Bleckmann, HAC n.s. III (1995) 75ff., and *Historia* 44 (1995) 83ff.

[19] Paschoud, *Cinq études* (1975), esp. 63ff., 147ff.

have provided an excellent opportunity to gather information on the African campaign.[20] Ammianus probably used an existing history for his detailed account of these events: perhaps these *Annales*.[21] Hostile elements in his account of Valentinian (a 'travesty') may well derive from Flavianus.[22]

All this is speculation, to be sure. Still, Bleckmann has shown that a Latin pagan historian had covered the period from c. 230 to Gratian's death, and, whether Flavianus or an *anonymus*, was used by Eunapius, Ammianus, the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, and Peter the Patrician.[23] Emphasis on relations between emperor and senate, stories about individual third-century senators, (Aradius) Rufinus, (Nummius) Albinus, and Pomponius Bassus, and other features, show that the work was strongly pro-senatorial.[24] The presentation of Aurelian, cruel but militarily effective, might deliberately reflect Valentinian.[25] Detail on how Constantine mocked his predecessors—Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, M. Aurelius, and Severus—would make a striking contrast to Theodosius' respect towards the Antonines, especially Trajan.[26] Likewise, the work criticised Valentinian for making Valens co-emperor simply because he was his brother—Valens' incompetence led to disaster. That, for patriotic reasons, Claudius II is said to have made the Gothic war his first priority, rather than

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[20] I owe this suggestion to W. Liebeschuetz. Flavianus as *vicarius*: *PLRE* I *Flavianus* 15.

[21] Ammianus tactfully omitted the death of the elder Theodosius, but alluded to it by the comparisons with Lusius Quietus and Corbulo (29.5.4). Valens, still nervous about the Theodorus oracle, must have ordered the deed: N. Gasperini, "La morte di Teodosio padre", *Contributi dell'Istituto di storia antica* (Milan) 1 (1972) 150–197.

[22] Paschoud, *Cognitio Gestorum* (1992) 67ff. Gratian's excessive devotion to his Alan bodyguard (*Epit. de Caes.* 47.6) is another negative feature perhaps attributable to the *Annales*.

[23] Paschoud, *Antiquité Tardive* 2, 71ff., basically follows Bleckmann, but prefers to restrict the HA's use of Flavianus to the period after the end of Dexippus. For the HA's use of Dexippus, Paschoud, HAC n.s. I (1991) 217ff. Cf. his stemma of sources, *Antiquité Tardive* 2, p. 80.

[24] Respectively Anon. post Dionem fr. 7; id. fr. 10.2; *Epit. de Caes.* 34.3. Cf. Schlumberger, *Epitome* 178, on Bassus and others and the 'traditionsbewußte römisch-senatorische' spirit of the *Epitome*. On Rufinus and Albinus, Bleckmann, *Reichskrise* 324ff., 401f.

[25] See now esp. Paschoud, *Cognitio Gestorum* 80ff.; id., *Aurélien* . . . 7ff.

[26] *Epit. de Caes.* 41.13 (Trajan); Anon. post Dionem fr. 15.2 (the full list, breaking off with Severus), discussed by Bleckmann, *Historia* 40 (1991) 356, 361; id., *Reichskrise* 402; *Historia* 44, 97f., citing, for the contrast, Pacatus, *PL* 12 (2). 11.6, where Theodosius is presented as the 'Vollender der mit Augustus einsetzenden Reihe guter Kaiser'.

attacking a pretender (Postumus), and that Valentinian chose to fight the Alamanni rather than the usurper Procopius, is implicitly to praise Theodosius, who tolerated Magnus Maximus for years, tackling the Huns and Goths instead.[27]

Cracco Ruggini has surely proved that it was not Flavianus, but Praetextatus (who died in December 384), who was attacked in the *Carmen contra paganos*. This entails a revised view of Flavianus' religious position. He cannot be the unnamed prefect who led a frenetic three-month campaign to revitalise paganism, with emphasis on oriental cults. Flavianus can still be regarded as a pagan paladin. As praetorian prefect, he joined Eugenius and Arbogast, circulated an oracle prophesying the end of Christianity in the 365th year (i.e. A.D. 394), and promised that after victory his side would stable its horses in a Milan basilica and conscript monks into the army. But Flavianus' choice of Jupiter and Hercules to counter Theodosius' *labarum* at the Frigidus shows that his religion was austere and traditional, not the new paganism of the orientalizers (easy targets for Christians)—the foremost of whom was Praetextatus. Flavianus sought to restore the Jovian-Herculian theology of Diocletian and the tetrarchs. The fanaticism of Julian would not have appealed to him—or to Symmachus. Flavianus was provoked to desert Theodosius by the anti-pagan legislation of 391–2, which marked a sharp break in policy.[28]

After this preamble, a bare description must be given of the HA's nature and content. It covers the emperors, legitimate or 'usurpers', and their heirs, for the years 117–285. There is a lacuna for the years 244–260: hence no *vitae* of Philip and Decius and their respective sons, Aemilianus, and Gallus and his son Volusian; and that of Valerian only begins after his capture by the Persians. There are thirty *vitae*: from Hadrian to Elagabalus each minor figure has a separate *vita*, while from the two Maximini onwards a single *vita* covers

[27] Bleckmann, *Historia* 44, 89ff., on Zonaras 12.25 and Amm. Marc. 26.4.1–2, 26.5.13.

[28] Cracco Ruggini, *Il paganesimo romano* (1979), passim. Supporting her identification: F. Dolbeau, "Damase, le *Carmen contra paganos* et Hériger de Lobbes", *Revue des études Augustiniennes* 27 (1981) 38–43; D. Shanzer, "The anonymous *Carmen contra paganos* and the date and identity of the centonist Proba", *Revue des études Augustiniennes* 32 (1986) 232–248; ead., "The date and identity of the centonist Proba", *Recherches Augustiniennes* 27 (1994) 75–96.

joint rulers, and usurpers (*tyranni*) are grouped together, thirty-two in one *vita* (*TT*) four in another (*Q*).

Certain recurring features were early recognised as suspect, particularly the documents, mostly letters and speeches, cited as authentic: only the lengthy piece attributed to Maximus (*C* 18.1–20.5) is now accepted as genuine. Further, besides Maximus, Herodian, and Dexippus, the HA claims as sources thirty-five writers otherwise unknown and surely invented.[29] There is much more spurious material, which none would now defend, especially in the 'secondary' lives, i.e. of Caesars, usurpers, and short-lived or junior emperors, in the series from Hadrian to Elagabalus; the lives from Severus Alexander onwards are stuffed with fiction. Nonetheless, at 549 pages in Hohl's edition, the HA is the fullest surviving Latin source for a century and a half of Roman history, and has to be used: truth must be sorted out from fiction. This requires investigating the mentality behind the work, its authorship, date of composition, and purpose. Despite deliberately misleading indications to the contrary—six separate authors, writing variously under the first tetrarchy or Constantine—the search has led to the age of Theodosius: the names of the 'Scriptores' are pseudonyms for a single author, whose unmasking, and the ensuing debate, can be sketched only briefly here.

The indices to the manuscripts (the order is disturbed in places) attribute the *vitae* to 'Aelius Spartianus', 'Julius Capitolinus', 'Vulcacius Gallicanus, *v(ir) c(larissimus)*', 'Aelius Lampridius', 'Trebellius Pollio', and 'Flavius Vopiscus, Syracusius'. As several of these claim to have written a good many more *vitae* than those under their name in the HA, it seemed natural to infer that an 'editor'—anonymous—made the 'selection', after A.D. 324, the latest dated allusion (*Hel.* 35.6, cf. *Gd.* 34.3–6).[30] The Corpus begins abruptly: *Origo imperatoris Hadriani vetustior* (*H.* 1.1). A preface must have been lost, it seems—damage to the manuscript, as with the lacuna, is postulated—perhaps also *vitae* of Nerva and Trajan: logically, the HA is taken, like Maximus' *vitae*, to be a continuation of Suetonius, but going beyond Maximus, to A.D. 285.[31]

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[29] Syme, *HA Papers* (1983) 98ff.

[30] The identification of the author of the HA as the younger Nicomachus Flavianus, proposed by Hartke, *Geschichte*, has been revived by Callu, *Vies d'Hadrien* . . . (1992), esp. LXXff., and elsewhere. For criticism of his elaborate theory of the HA's composition, Paschoud, *Aurélien* . . . XXXff.

[31] Hartke, *Kinderkaiser* 324ff., sought to prove that the HA 'begann abrupt und

In compensation, several lives after the *Hadrian* have prefaces, some addressed to emperors;[32] and rulers are addressed or referred to as alive in the body of some *vitae*. That of Hadrian's heir L. Aelius Caesar opens *Diocletiano Augusto Ael(ius) Spartianus suus sal(utem)*. 'Spartianus' announces his plan, "already achieved as far as Hadrian", to compose lives not only of all *principes* but also of those who only became Caesar but not Augustus, further, of those "who in any other fashion whatsoever have attained to either the fame or the hope of the principate (i.e. usurpers)." Shortly afterwards (*Ael.* 2.2) he refers to Galerius and Constantius as Caesars, implying a date between 293 and 305. 'Capitolinus' in the *Marcus* (*MA* 19.12) and *Verus* (*V* 11.4) likewise addresses Diocletian. Then comes the first usurper, Avidius Cassius, portrayed very positively, in the only *vita* assigned to 'Vulcacius Gallicanus': he informs Diocletian that he plans lives of all who had the name of *imperator, sive iuste sive iniuste, ut omnes purpuratos, Auguste, cognosceres* (*AC* 3.3).

The next three lives, attributed to 'Lampridius', 'Capitolinus', and 'Spartianus', have no reference to the time of writing.[33] In the *Severus*, 'Spartianus' offers Diocletian reflections on the defects of hereditary succession (*S* 20.4–21.12). In the *vita* of Severus' rival Pescennius Niger, 'Spartianus' tells Diocletian that he has done his best, after much research, in spite of the lack of materials on unrecognised rulers, and will now proceed to Albinus (*PN* 9.1–4). Yet the *Albinus* is assigned to 'Capitolinus'; and one of the noble families to which its subject allegedly belonged, the Ceionii, is said to have been exalted by "you, greatest Constantine" (*ClA* 4.2). The *Caracalla*, by 'Spartianus', has no contemporary reference, but his *Geta* invokes (*G* 1.1) *Constantine Auguste*. The *Albinus* and *Geta* are thus ostensibly later than the *Pescennius*, likewise than the *Macrinus*, by 'Capitolinus', who explains that *quae de plurimis collecta serenitati tuae, Diocletiane Auguste, detulimus, quia te cupidum veterum imperatorum esse perspeximus* (*OM* 15.4). He had opened with an

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ohne Einleitung, wie sie uns vorliegt'; at 351 n. 1 he refers to an unpublished sketch on these lines by C. Cichorius, which he intended to work up (nothing seems to have come of it). Hartke's case is criticized by Syme, *Emperors* 95ff., and Stubenrauch, *Kompositionsprobleme* (1982) 59–104, defending the view that the original opening is lost. Den Hengst, *The Prefaces* (1981) 14ff., is non-committal, likewise Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* XXXV.

[32] Den Hengst, *Prefaces*; Stubenrauch, *Kompositionsprobleme*.

[33] The *Commodus* of 'Lampridius' begins with a reference to the *vita Marci Antonini*, as if he had written it—yet the HA *vita* is given not to him, but to 'Capitolinus'.

elaborate justification for producing "lives of those *principes* or usurpers who did not long rule", whose lives are inevitably obscure (*OM* 1.1–5). The brief *vita* of Macrinus' son (*Dd*), by 'Lampridius'—only the second 'contribution' by this author—is largely fiction, with no reference to a living emperor. The two further lives by 'Lampridius', of Elagabalus and Severus Alexander, are both dedicated to Constantine, "who venerated *sanctum illud Antoninorum nomen*, polluted by Elagabalus" (*Hel.* 2.4).

The *vita* ends with a long address to Constantine (*Hel.* 34.1–35.7), citing his alleged dictum *imperatorem esse fortunae est* to explain how *haec clades* [Elagabalus] *loco principum fuerit*. 'Lampridius' had written this *vita* reluctantly, only because Constantine pressed him (*Hel.* 35.1). He will now "write of those who followed after . . . the glory of them all being Claudius, founder of your family"—which makes him nervous that he will be accused of flattery. He will go right up to Diocletian, "father of the golden age", and Maximian (perhaps meaning Galerius), "father of the age of iron". Others, more talented, must devote many—and more eloquent—pages to Constantine. Still, the four "whose power fell under your control, Licinius, Severus, Alexander, and Maxentius", also require treatment, which must be fair and objective: "For I shall not follow the common practice . . . and belittle the merits of those who have been defeated: I realize that it enhances your glory if I declare all the good qualities that they possessed, with truthfulness" (*Hel.* 35.1–5). This statement could only have been written after Licinius' defeat in 324. Whether anyone would then have dared to express such an intention is another matter.[34]

The *Severus Alexander* is easily the longest life, occupies a central position, and is a largely fictional "mirror for princes": Alexander, the ideal ruler, is the exact opposite of his perverted cousin. It has no preface, but at the end 'Lampridius' writes: "You regularly ask, greatest Constantine, what it was that made a Syrian and alien-born person such a great *princeps*" (*AS* 65.1). The reply is lengthy and involved (65.2–68.4), stressing Alexander's refusal to admit eunuchs to his councils and ministries, with an astonishing comment: "I know that it is dangerous to say things like this to an emperor who has been subject to such creatures"—but you, Constantine, have now learned to keep them in their place (*AS* 66.3–67.1).

[34] A similar date is implied by a remark about Licinius, *Gd.* 34.4–6.

There follow multiple *vitae* by 'Capitolinus': two Maximini, three Gordians, Maximus (Pupienus) and Balbinus. Addressing Constantine (*Max* 1.1–3), 'Capitolinus' explains that, to save wearying the emperor, he has put the two Maximini into one volume and will adopt the same practice from now on (except for the great emperors). The point is repeated in the next *vita* (*Gd* 1.1–5), at the end of which, after a derogatory remark about Licinius, "greatest Constantine" is assured that the author has investigated everything worth knowing on his subject (*Gd* 34. 3–6).

After the last 'Capitolinus'-*vita* (*MB*) comes the lacuna, although "there are no frayed edges at the beginning or end of it".[35] The final part, covering 260–285, is divided between 'Trebellius Pollio', on two Valerians, two Gallieni, 'Thirty Tyrants', and Claudius with his brother Quintillus, and 'Flavius Vopiscus Syracusius' on Aurelian, Tacitus with his 'brother' Florianus, Probus, a *Quadriga tyrannorum*, and Carus with his sons. 'Vopiscus' is apparently later than 'Pollio', whom he cites for biographies "from the two Philips to Claudius and Quintillus" (*A* 2.1) and praises for his diligence and care in covering thirty usurpers in one book (*Q* 1.3). 'Pollio' calls Claudius II "head of the family of our Caesar Constantius", the man "from whom the most vigilant Caesar Constantius derives his origin" (*Gall.* 7.1, 14.3). He must take special care, "out of respect for Constantius Caesar", but is not praising Claudius to curry favour with Constantius (*Cl.* 1.1, 3.1). An oracle shows that Claudius' family is "divinely appointed to bring felicity to the state" (*Cl.* 10.1); "Constantius, . . . himself from the family of an Augustus, will give us, likewise, many Augusti of his own—with all safety to the Augusti Diocletian and Maximian and his brother Galerius" (*Cl.* 10.7). Finally, he specifies Constantius' relationship to Claudius (*Cl.* 13.1–4). Elsewhere 'Pollio' stresses his aims: to ensure "historical fidelity . . . for I have not promised myself eloquence, but facts;[36] I am not writing, but dictating, these little books . . . on the life of *principes*, and dictating with such haste that . . . I have no chance to draw breath" (*T* 11.6–7, 33.8).[37]

'Vopiscus', ostensibly writing when Constantius was already emperor,

[35] Den Hengst, *Prefaces* 71, adding to the arguments of Birley, BHAC 1972/'74 (1976) 55ff., for the lacuna being deliberate, cf. below.

[36] Cf. Olympiod., fr. 1, who excused his style (criticized by Photius) on the grounds that he was providing not history but the materials for history.

[37] On the claim to have been dictating in haste, cf. below.

i.e. 305–6 (*A* 44.5), begins with an anecdote. At the Hilaria he was invited by the prefect of Rome Junius Tiberianus into his official carriage. They talked of many things, especially *de vita principum*. Tiberianus, dismayed that the great Aurelian, to whom he was related, was unknown to posterity, offered 'Vopiscus' access to sources and urged him to write Aurelian's life. They also discussed 'Trebellius Pollio', whom Tiberianus criticized for carelessness and brevity. 'Vopiscus' countered that no historical writer had not told some sort of falsehood, citing Livy, Sallust, Tacitus, and Trogus. Tiberianus accepted this, adding: "Write whatever you like, for you can be sure to have as companions in falsehood those whom we admire as masters of historical eloquence" (*A* 1.1–2.2).

Two prefects called Junius Tiberianus are attested, in 291–2 and in 303–4; only the first was in office during the Hilaria (25 March).[38] In the *Probus*, 'Vopiscus' lets the mask slip: among the predecessors he praises are 'Capitolinus' and 'Lampridius' (*Pr.* 2.7)—yet Lampridius dedicated his work to Constantine, and 'Capitolinus' was still writing after 324: 'Vopiscus' was at work in 305–6 (*A* 44.5). Minor problems, compared with the contradictions which provoked Dessau's revolutionary paper.[39] The HA could not have been written under Diocletian and Constantine, he argued. Constantine's descent from Claudius II, so prominent in the 'Pollio'-lives, was first made public—as a novelty—in 310.[40] 'Pollio' apparently knew about it over five years earlier. Names first prominent in the later fourth century are introduced in fictional contexts: Toxotius, Ragonius Celsus, Faltonius Probus, Clodius Celsinus. The prophecy about the emperor Probus' descendants (*Pr.* 24.1) must allude to the family of Petronius Probus (cos. 371), father of the consuls of 395. The Gothic-Alan ancestry assigned to Maximinus (*Max.* 1.5–6) was inconceivable before the later fourth century. Two lengthy passages were surely lifted from Aurelius Victor and Eutropius, who did not publish until the 360s.[41] The HA was the work of a single author, not six: the 'Scriptores' shared similarities of technique, the same kind of invented documents and turns of phrase, the same weakness for punning on names.

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[38] See e.g. Johne, *Kaiserbiographie* (1976), esp. 141ff.

[39] Dessau, *Hermes* 24 (1889) 337ff.

[40] *PL* VI (VII) 2.1–2 (A.D. 310) refers to the *avita cognatio* from Claudius II as something that 'most people perhaps do not yet know'. Syme, *HA Papers* 66ff., discusses 'The fraud of the year 310'.

[41] *S* 17.5ff. > Aur. Vict. 20.1ff.; *MA* 16.3ff. > Eutrop. 8.11ff.

Dessau concluded that the HA was a *Fälschung*, composed in the 390s.[42] As to motive, he conjectured that the unknown author (posing as the discoverer of a collection of *vitae* from an earlier era) hoped to arouse greater interest by a "Mystifikation".

Answering criticism by Mommsen[43] and others, Dessau noted further anachronisms, but declined to tackle at length Mommsen's question: *cui bono*?[44] Debate over details continues, but a date c. 400 and a single author, Dessau's basic contentions, are now the *communis opinio*.[45] Attention has concentrated on distinguishing truth from fiction, identifying sources or literary borrowings and echoes, and refining the date of composition, so as to establish the the author's milieu, methods, and intentions.

For these questions, fiction is more instructive than 'facts'. Of the historical sources acknowledged as such only Herodian is extant. Naturally—and typically for ancient writers—he was used far more than is openly admitted; and on several occasions is cited under the name of Arrianus rather than Herodianus (to mislead or to multiply authorities, or by inadvertence).[46] The way that Herodian's version is transformed is instructive: the HA makes the senatorial co-emperors of 238, Pupienus and Balbinus, a contrasted pair, the former very plebeian, the latter blue-blooded. The effect is impressive.[47] Yet Herodian says—and epigraphy confirms—that Pupienus was just as well-born as his colleague. Was the HA deliberately teasing, or seeking to annoy Pupienus' descendants?[48]

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[42] Barnes, *Historia* 44 (1995) 497–500, and (more fully) *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 79 (1997) 259–267, shows how Dessau's use of *Fälschung* has been misunderstood from Hohl (in 1914) onwards, and that Dessau clearly followed a technical definition by E. Bernheim.

[43] Mommsen, *Hermes* 25 (1890) 228ff., conceded anachronism, but offered an elaborate six-stage (not 'three-stage' as has been claimed) process to explain the character of the work, with revisions up to the Theodosian period: on this 'labyrinthine edifice', cf. Syme, *The HA* 18ff.

[44] Dessau, *Hermes* 27 (1892) 561ff.

[45] For surveys: Hohl, *Wiener Studien* 71 (1958) 132–152; Chastagnol, *Recherches sur l'HA* (1970); Johne, *Kaiserbiographie* 11ff.; Lippold (one of a handful of remaining dissenters from Dessau), *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 15 (1991) 687ff.; id., *Kommentar zur v. Maximini Duo* (1991) 3ff. (to a large extent answered by Brandt, *Kommentar zur v. Maximi et Balbini* (1996) 13ff.); Callu, *Hadrien. . . .*VIIff.; Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* IXff.; Paschoud, *Aurélien . . .* IXf.

[46] Cf. Straub, *Studien* 23, 156 n. 122; Barnes, *Sources* 37; Brandt, *Kommentar* 118f.

[47] Syme, *Emperors* 170ff.; 253ff.

[48] Herodian 8.7.4, 8.1 (the HA was perhaps misled by Herodian 7.10.4, where Balbinus is called a patrician, Pupienus is not); on Pupienus, Syme, *Emperors* 173ff., and, with new detail, Chausson, *Cahiers Glotz* 7, 319ff.

Borrowings, adaptations, or echoes from late fourth and early fifth century authors have also been identified: notably Jerome, Ammianus, and Claudian.[49] Sceptics refuse assent, or assert reverse borrowing, by the later writers from the HA, written—as is pretended—in the years c. 305–324; or, with the HA passages drawn from Victor and Eutropius, it is claimed that all three used the KG.[50] By contrast, it is now even possible to detect the names of fourth century historians whom the HA knew and used—but could not cite because of the fictional time of writing: 'Camouflaged' in context or slightly altered are 'Aurelius Victor' and 'Festus' (*OM* 4.2–4), the bogus biographer 'Valerius Marcellinus' (*MB* 4.5) or 'Fabius Marcellinus' (*AS* 48.6; *Pr.* 2.7), 'Eutropius', an invented kinsman of Claudius II (*Cl.* 13.2), 'Nicomachus' the translator (*A* 27.6), perhaps even Eusebius Nanneticus, the postulated author of the KG, as 'Claudius Eusthenius' an invented biographer of the tetrarchs (*Car.* 18.5).[51]

Some who accepted Dessau's basic case offered variant datings. Long influential was Baynes' claim that the HA was propaganda for Julian, written in the 360s. It no longer has any support.[52] Others have argued for a later date, well into the fifth century.[53] The consensus now puts the HA after the defeat of the pagan cause at the Frigidus (September 394), but not much, perhaps 399 or at latest c. 406, more or less contemporary with the *Epitome de Caesaribus*.[54] As for the unity of authorship, Dessau still has critics. But his criteria have been greatly extended,[55] and the computer has been used

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[49] Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste*, esp. LXXXIXf. (Ammianus), XCIIIff. (Jerome and Claudian), with further literature.

[50] This argument is revived by Chausson, HAC n.s. V (1997) 97ff. But for the HA's use of Victor and Eutropius, see e.g. Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* LXVIff.

[51] Schlumberger, *Epitome* 129f., noting that in *AS* 48.6f. 'Fabius Marcellinus' appears with 'Aurelius Verus' and 'Statius Valens', sees in the first a reference to Ammianus, the second to Victor, the third to Eutropius, who dedicated his *Breviarium* to Valens. Paschoud, *Historia* 44 (1995) 502ff., adds Nicomachus and Eusthenius-Eusebius.

[52] Baynes, *The HA* (1926). See Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* XXVIff.

[53] Notably Straub, *Studien* 75ff., and *Heidnische Geschichtsapologetik* (1963); latterly Kolb, *Untersuchungen* (1987) 68ff.

[54] Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* XXXff., summarizes, his own preference being 395–399; Paschoud, *Aurélien* . . . XIIIff., favours the years between 395–7 and 404–6, the latter terminus being supplied by *A* 18.5–21.4, notably the consultation of the Sibylline Books, destroyed by Stilicho at latest in 408. The defeat of the pagan Radagaisus in 406 by Christian forces "ruinait la démonstration implicite contenue dans le passage en question de la *vita Aureliani*, qui doit donc être antérieur à cette date" (id., p. XVII).

[55] E.g. White, *JRS* 57 (1967) 115ff.; Mouchová, *Untersuchungen* (1975).

in support.[56] Claims based on further computer-generated enquiries that differences of style do show up[57] do not convince. As Dessau pointed out, it inevitably made for variation when the author, in different parts of his work, hurriedly abbreviated a detailed earlier Latin source (e.g. the *verbosissimus* Maximus), translated and adapted Greek ones (Herodian, Dexippus), or composed fiction.[58] He was widely read: not merely in the classics and new literature of the fourth century but in technical works too.[59] Because he disclaimed the higher eloquence, he did not have to polish and standardise everywhere. Like most historical writers, he took over his material from wherever he could find it. Haste made it impossible to recast it all. In places he could achieve pleasing effects, although some fine phrases may not be his own. Gibbon remarked of *discordiae . . . sed tacitae, et quae intelligerentur potius quam viderentur* (*MB* 14.1) that "this well-chosen expression is probably stolen from some better writer".[60]

Changes of source (or of tack) are often clearly signalled, with—clear sign of impatience—expressions such as *et quoniam longum est minora persequi, huius magnifica illa*, this one followed by the extract adapted from Victor (*S* 17.5–19.3).[61] Muddle and confusion is apparent with emperors who had heirs, colleagues, or rivals—usurpers—who were assigned separate lives: the need to reserve material from the source for the 'secondary' life caused difficulty with the completion of the 'primary' life, which then in some cases seemed too short, making necessary the addition of further material, often fictional.[62]

The author was determined to amuse himself and a group of friends, there can be no doubt. But even if, as Syme argued,[63] this

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[56] Marriott, *JRS* 69 (1979) 65ff.

[57] Meißner, *Rivista di cultura classica e medioevale* 34 (1992) 47ff., and HAC n.s. V 1994 (1997) 175ff.

[58] Dessau, *Hermes* 27, 595ff. Meißner, HAC n.s. V (1997) 215, concedes that the use of 'älteres Material über weite Strecken nur unwesentlich verändert' has resulted in a relatively non-uniform style.

[59] Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* LIIff., LXXIVff., with full bibliography on the author's reading habits; on technical works, Syme, *Ammianus and the HA* 130, and *Emperors* 251.

[60] E. Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* I (London, Bell & Daldy, 1872) 239 (Ch. VII). Cf. also on *MB* 14.1 Brandt, *Kommentar* 216f. (not citing Gibbon).

[61] Mouchová, *Untersuchungen* 19ff., discusses *longum est* and related turns of phrase.

[62] *MA* 19.5 (*et quidem haec breviter et congeste*) is one of several passages reflecting haste and confusion in the 'primary' lives.

[63] Syme, *Ammianus and the HA* 183ff.; *The HA* 111f.; *Emperors* 260ff.; *HA Papers* 126ff.; 218ff., etc.

was the main object of the exercise, undertaken by a "rogue scholar", the man still had strong views and puts them across, sometimes openly and obviously, sometimes subtly. He spoke as a senator and exalted the role of senators, who are even called *principes mundi* in one place (*Pr.* 11.2). Usurpers play an extraordinarily prominent role: the KG perhaps gave him this idea. But if, as now generally believed, the author had lived through Eugenius' usurpation and its aftermath, his repeated assertion of the virtues of those whose defeat alone has caused them to be labelled 'usurpers' is readily understandable. It may be, of course, that he simply hoped to attract attention by abbreviating and continuing the popular Marius Maximus, and then outdoing Maximus by adding *vitae* precisely of figures to whom Maximus had declined to allot separate lives—and by 'improving' Maximus with fiction, unobtrusively tucked in here and there in the 'primary' lives based on Maximus, wholesale in the 'secondary' lives. In the 'post-Maximus' part, Herodian was exploited, up to 238, Dexippus for the years 238–270 or 275, then perhaps Flavianus. The literary competition was with the KG and with historians—Flavianus and Ammianus—whose work was of a very different character to that of Maximus.

Admiration for Diocletian and the tetrarchic system and hostility to hereditary succession are manifest,[64] with particularly strong comments about the dangers of boy emperors: *dii avertant pueros principes* (*Tac.* 6.5).[65] There are also warnings about the *princeps clausus* (*A* 43.1–4, cf. *AS* 66.3) the ruler cut off from the outside world.[66] Yet, at first sight inconsistently, the dynastic principle is treated positively in numerous passages exalting Claudius II and his posterity. But it is Constantius I and all his descendants, not just Constantine himself, that are meant. The former category takes us well beyond Julian, indeed well beyond Constantia, the posthumous daughter of Constantius II, who was married to Gratian, but died not long before him.[67]

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[64] Kolb, *Untersuchungen*, 1ff.

[65] Hartke, *Kinderkaiser* passim; Paschoud, *Aurélien* . . . 269f.

[66] Stroheker, BHAC 1968/'69 (1970) 273ff.; Chastagnol, BHAC 1982/'83 (1985) 149ff., with parallels, including from Synesius, not adduced as verbal echoes, but as representative of the same cultural milieu, viz. the age of Arcadius; Paschoud, *Aurélien* . . . 204.

[67] Ammianus 21.15.6; *PLRE* I *Constantia* 2. Mommsen raised his question, '*cui bono*?', *Hermes* 25, 302f., with particular reference to the stress on the ancestry and descendants of Constantius I in the HA. O. Hirschfeld, *Kleine Schriften* (Berlin, 1913)

Further, there were descendants of Julius Constantius, half-brother of Constantine I: Justina, Magnentius' widow, whom Valentinian I married;[68] and, it now emerges, another Constantia, married to Memmius Vitrasius Orfitus, prefect of Rome in 353–5 and 357–9 and father-in-law of Symmachus.[69] Hence Valentinian II could claim descent from Constantius—and his sister Galla, Theodosius' second wife. That marriage produced the princess Galla Placidia. Thus flattery of senatorial families linked by descent to Constantius I and by extension alleged descendants of Claudius II may explain the HA's attitude. Remarkably, Probus is praised even more than Claudius. One reason may be Probus' deference to the senate, on which the author could have found hints in his sources.[70] But "many said that Probus was a kinsman of Claudius, the best and most venerable emperor": the author suspends judgement, since the kinship is allegedly attested only by one Greek writer, but remembers reading in a journal (*ephemeris*) that Probus had a sister called Claudia (*Pr.* 3.3–4). Of course, praise of Probus was also a chance to flatter the Anicii with the prophecy about Probus' descendants who settled around Verona and were all to hold *summis honoribus* (*Pr.* 24.1–3).[71]

The author certainly sought to interest the contemporary aristocracy by repeated naming of their ancestors, real or imaginary. A few examples may be given. Bogus names abound in the work, many fabricated from persons named in classical writers, especially Cicero and Suetonius.[72] By writing separate lives, unlike Maximus, of Aelius Caesar and L. Verus, he gave added stress to their family, the Ceionii Commodi. Their dubious link with the prominent fourth-century Ceionii Albini was fabricated in the *Albinus* by alleging that usurper's descent from Postumii, Albini, and Ceionii (*ClA.* 4.1ff.). Several spurious names, including a Ceionius Albinus, were inserted in the list

887ff., suggested that Gratian's marriage to Constantia was the explanation. (Baynes, *The HA*, offered propaganda for Julian instead.)

[68] J. Rougé, *Cahiers d'Histoire* 3 (1958) 11 and *Latomus* 33 (1974) 676ff.

[69] Alan Cameron, *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1997) 295ff., shows that Constantia, wife of Orfitus, was from the house of Constantine, perhaps a daughter of Hannibalianus and Constantina.

[70] Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* 1064ff.

[71] Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* XCVII.

[72] A great many cases were pointed out by Domaszewski, *Die Personennamen* (1918); but his approach was extreme, based on the assumption that the HA was written at Nemausus in the 6th century. See rather Syme, *Emperors* 1ff.

of forty-one noble victims of Severus (*S* 13.1–7).[73] That there are five fictitious 'Maecii' and three 'Maeciani' is doubtless because of Furius Maecius Gracchus, prefect of Rome in 379.[74] *Posteri* are, to be sure, mentioned of third-century figures who did indeed have descendants in Theodosian Rome: those of Gallienus are given as a reason for omitting further discreditable detail on that emperor (*Gall.* 19.8–20.1); Zenobia's *posteri* are mentioned more briefly (*TT* 27.2).[75] There are two transparent allusions to Nicomachus Flavianus: the Nicomachus who translated a letter of Zenobia into Greek (*A* 27.6) and the senator 'Maecius Faltonius Nicomachus' who delivers the vigorous speech against boy emperors (*Tac.* 5.3–7.1).[76]

It used to be maintained that the HA had little interest in Christianity. Explicit references are limited, and it was a long time before anyone took notice of 'religious propaganda' in the work.[77] Straub went to the other extreme, regarding the HA as a *Historia adversus Christianos*.[78] There are, certainly, implicit anti-Christian attitudes, for example the denial of Lactantius' claim that no attempt was made to liberate the persecutor Valerian from Persian captivity.[79] One may note also that the lacuna might have been deliberately created, to avoid the embarassment of treating the allegedly Christian Philip and the persecutors Decius and Valerian.[80] (Where they are mentioned elsewhere, Philip is portrayed very negatively, while Decius and Valerian, who recur frequently, are treated as ideal emperors.)[81]

Further, the disproportionately lengthy and mainly fictional lives of Elagabalus and Severus Alexander can be read as coded portrayals

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[73] 'Ceionius Albinus' occurs at *S* 13.3.

[74] Syme, *Ammianus and the HA* 162f., and *Emperors* 169.

[75] Chausson, *Journal des Savants* 1997, esp. 306, finds links between the Egnatii, descended from Gallienus' mother's family, and the fourth century Ceionii and Nicomachi; on Zenobia's descendants, Callu, HAC n.s. V (1997) 71ff.

[76] Honoré, *Virius Nicomachus Flavianus* 16f., argues that the speech is a version of an actual address by Flavianus; against, Paschoud, *Aurélien* . . . 265ff.

[77] Geffcken, *Hermes* 55 (1920) 279ff., was the first serious examination.

[78] Straub, *Heidnische Geschichtsapologetik*.

[79] As shown by Alföldi, BHAC 1963 (1964) 1ff., comparing Lact., *De mort. pers.* 5.5, and HA, *Val.* 3.2, etc. That the author's religious attitude is less than blatant and all-pervasive is hardly surprising if he wrote as a pagan c. 400. Compare Ammianus, often held to have been moderate in his treatment of Christianity: Barnes, *Ammianus*, esp. 77ff., detects subtly worded hostility.

[80] Birley, BHAC 1972/'74 (1976) 55ff. (replying to criticism by Syme, *Emperors & Biography* 199ff., of an earlier version of the argument); supported by den Hengst, *Prefaces* 70ff.

[81] Cf. esp. Syme, *Emperors* 194ff.

of Constantine and Julian.[82] Elagabalus, who sought to destroy the national cults of Rome, is a parody of Constantine—one may single out his refusal to ascend the Capitol and his destruction of tombs on the Vatican (*Hel.* 15.7, 23.1). The morally pure and tolerant Severus Alexander—who ascended the Capitol every week when in Rome (*AS* 43.5)—reflects the pagans' ideal emperor: his favour to Jews and tolerance of Christians (22.4); his "morning worship (when pure) in his *lararium*, in which he had statues both of deified emperors (but only the best) and holier souls, among them Apollonius and, according to a writer of his times, Christ, Abraham, and Orfeus, and others of this kind, and of his ancestors" (29.2); his plan to construct temples for Christ without statues, abandoned when he realised this would lead to everyone becoming Christians and the temples being deserted (43–6); his observance of the golden mean (51.7–8).

Passages in the *Aurelian* likewise have a strong religious focus: the senators are criticized by the emperor for behaving as if they were in a *Christianorum ecclesia* rather than *in templo deorum omnium* and for failing to consult the Sibylline books (*A* 18.1ff., esp. 20.5). Apollonius of Tyana, the pagans' counterpart to Jesus, appears to Aurelian in a vision (*A* 24.2ff.). Towards the end of the work the Egyptians are scathingly criticized in a fictitious letter of Hadrian, especially the Christians and their bishops (*Q* 7.5–8.7). Such striking examples apart, there are dozens of brief—fictitious—statements, often tucked unobtrusively into otherwise 'factual' contexts, which reveal the author as an adherent of the old religion.

If, as seems most likely, the HA was written some time between 395 and 405, it may be characterized as a rewriting of the second and third centuries as its author believed they ought to have been. It is a reaction to Christianity triumphant and intolerant: the pagans should be treated with tolerance because they had been tolerant when they themselves were strong; they too had had their great figures, Apollonius the equal of Christ, and the morally pure and tolerant Severus Alexander, contrasted with the intolerant and morally perverted Elagabalus who foreshadowed Constantine.[83] Other fea-

[82] Turcan, *Bulletin G. Budé* 37 (1988) 38ff.; Cracco Ruggini, HAC n.s. I (1991) 123ff.

[83] See esp. Paschoud, BHAC 1977/'78 (1980) 163ff.; id., in *I cristiani e l'impero nel IV secolo* (1988) 155ff.; *Cristianesimo nella storia* 11 (1990) 545ff.; *Acme* 50 (1997) 79ff. His views are summarized here.

tures of the work which reveal the author's mentality have already been stressed: his wish to embellish the memory of usurpers; to flatter the genealogical pretensions of the aristocracy and to uphold the supreme dignity of the Roman senate; and, not least, his sense of fun and love of words, his growing enthusiasm for fiction. It may be doubted whether he intended to achieve more than to entertain himself and a small circle of like-minded friends.That this circle was centred among the Symmachi and Nicomachi Flaviani seems at least probable, given that the work seems to have survived in the library of Q. Aurelius Memmius Symmachus, consul 485, who used it for his own *Historia Romana*.[84]

A word, finally, on the six pseudonyms.[85] That 'Spartianus' and 'Lampridius' are both called 'Aelius' may have something to do with the HA's inception with Aelius Hadrianus. The two cognomina are both rare. 'Julius Capitolinus' has been explained as a reminiscence of Cicero and Livy.[86] 'Vulcacius Gallicanus' may reflect Cicero or Republican literature too, but may echo the names of fourth century senators.[87] The cognomen of 'Flavius Vopiscus' may have been inspired by *vopiscus* meaning 'surviving twin'.[88] As for 'Trebellius Pollio', the cognomen has been taken as an allusion to Asinius Pollio's negative view of Caesar's *Commentarii*.[89] One may go further: the tribunes Asinius Pollio and L. Trebellius acted together in 47 BC. Four years later, Cicero commented witheringly on Trebellius, who had assumed the cognomen Fides: *O Fide! hoc enim opinor Trebellium sumpsisse cognomen. quae potest esse maior fides quam fraudare creditores*. Claims by 'Trebellius Pollio' to be 'preserving *fides*'—*hos ego versus a quodam*

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[84] *PLRE* II *Symmachus* 10. See Enßlin, *Des Symmachus Historia Romana* (1949); Callu, BHAC 1982/'83 (1985) 89ff.

[85] Domaszewski, *Personennamen* 11ff.; Syme, *Emperors* 73ff.

[86] Chastagnol, BHAC 1986/'89 (1991) 21ff., and *Histoire Auguste* CIIIf., suggests an evocation of the hero of 387 B.C., M. Manlius Capitolinus (Livy 5.31.1, 47; 6.16.2; Cicero, *De domo* 101, 144). Approved by Brandt, *Kommentar* 109.

[87] Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste* CIII.

[88] Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 7.47: *Vopiscos appellabant e geminis qui retenti utero nascerentur altero interempto abortu—namque maxima etsi rara circa hoc miracula existunt*, adduced by Hohl, *Klio* 12 (1912) 474, and discussed by Paschoud, *Aurélien* . . . XXVI. (Cf. n. 90 below.)

[89] Paschoud, *Aurélien* . . . 68, developing den Hengst, *Prefaces* 106f., on Suet. *D. Iul.* 56.4: *Pollio Asinius parum diligenter parumque integra veritate compositos putat*. Den Hengst, ib., 68f., derives the name 'Pollio' from Juv. 6.387f., *an Capitolinam deberet Pollio quercum/ sperare et fidibus promittere*, which has the merit of linking by association 'Capitolinus' and 'Pollio' (and, one may add, *fidibus*, albeit meaning a musical instrument here, is nicely echoed by *fidem servarem* in *TT* 11.6).

grammatico translatos ita posui, ut fidem servarem, non quo <non> melius potuerint transferri, sed ut fidelitas historica servaretur (*T* 11.6)—surely indicate what the author was thinking of when he chose his fifth pseudonym.[90]

The author confessed that he was dictating, with such haste that he hardly had the chance to draw breath. This was an excuse for lack of literary polish, facts not *eloquentia* (*T* 33.8).[91] If this claim may be believed, it would be enough to explain much of the incoherence and internal contradictions in the work, and the mixture of styles. Soon afterwards he claims to have been given *carte blanche* by the prefect Tiberianus to write whatever he wanted, a licence to lie (*A* 2.2). Whatever the order in which the *vitae* were composed, the author had clearly adopted this view at an early stage. It did not necessarily make his task simpler. One may apply to the HA an apt comment by Paschoud (referring to Zosimus): "*Proust écrit quelque part que dire la vérité ne pose aucun problème, tandis que mentir systématiquement exige une ingéniosité toujours accrue: la vérité s'harmonise tout naturellement avec la vérité, le mensonge exige un effort sans cesse plus intense de cohérence.*"[92]

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[90] Plut. *Ant.* 9.1–2. Cic. *Phil.* 6.11, cf. 13.26, *et fidei patronus, fraudator creditorum*, Trebellius. Cicero also attacked Trebellius in *Phil.* 10.22 and 11.13, and just before that, 11.11, had called Bestia *alter Caesar Vopiscus*, referring to the consular candidate of 90 BC. Noted by Domaszewski, *Personennamen* 11f., who also saw the reference to the Antonian Trebellius (citing *Phil.* 11.13), but missed 'Fides'. See now on 'Vopiscus' and 'Pollio' A.R. Birley, HAC n.s. VIII (2002) 33ff.

[91] Hence perhaps just a topos. But see Schlumberger, BHAC 1972/'74 (1976) 221ff. Hartke, *Geschichte*, esp. 146ff., proposed that the HA had been composed in the four months between the Frigidus and the death of Theodosius by the younger Nicomachus; modified in id., *Kinderkaiser* 412ff.

[92] Paschoud, *Cinq études* (1975) 217. I am grateful to François Paschoud and François Chausson, who kindly sent me copies of their most recent articles, and to Wolf Liebeschuetz for discussion of Nicomachus' *Annales*. I remain, of course, responsible for the use to which these have been put; and it need hardly be added that it has been impossible, in the space allocated, to do justice to the vast literature on the HA. The Bibliography is principally of works cited above.

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Studies

1. *Historia Augusta Colloquia*

a) The first Colloquium was published as Historia-Augusta-Colloquium Bonn 1963. Antiquitas Reihe 4, Beiträge zur Historia-Augusta-Forschung, Band 2, unter Mitwirkung von J. Straub hrsg. von A. Alföldi (Bonn, Habelt, 1964). Twelve more volumes were published in the same 'Reihe'; up to 1977/1978 edited by Alföldi with Straub's 'Mitwirkung', the next three edited by Straub alone; the last, with the Colloquia of 1986 and 1989, was edited by K. Rosen, (= Beitr. Bd. 21, 1991). These Colloquia are abbreviated in the notes as BHAC, with dates of Colloquium and publication.

b) Vol. I of the Historiae Augustae Colloquia, Nova Series, was published as Colloquium Parisinum 1990. Atti dei Convegni sulla Historia Augusta, a cura di G. Bonamente e N. Duval (Macerata, Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, 1991). The series, edited by Bonamente and colleagues (and from II onwards published by Edipuglia, Bari), has now reached VIII (2000). These are abbreviated HAC n.s., with volume number and date of publication.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE CHURCH HISTORIANS AFTER EUSEBIUS

Peter Van Deun

The persecutions in the age of Diocletian had barely come to an end and the freedom of religion had barely been promulgated when a new literary genre came into existence, now called "early Christian Church history". Not all of these writings have come down to us in their integrity. The genre flourished over a rather short period of time, viz. from the early 4th to the early 7th century, during which time no serious attempts were made at something like a profane equivalent of these Church histories.

Lactantius' *De mortibus persecutorum* and Eusebius of Caesarea's *HE* are generally considered to be the pioneers in this genre. They, and especially Eusebius, are explicitly referred to by nearly all of the later authors of Church histories. As their subject these Church historians either chose the events of their own time or more frequently the events that happened in a more or less recent period. All of them acted privately, i.e. not by order of a patriarch or an emperor. The scope of e.g. Gelasius of Caesarea and Gelasius of Cyzicus is limited to the Church, but this is not always the case. Socrates, Sozomenus and Evagrius Scholasticus, for example, have a wider interest and also mention events in the field of general politics. Most of these historical writings follow the orthodox dogma as established by the oecumenical councils among others. This does not do away with the fact that these works not only clearly bear the stamp of the personalities of the different authors but also try to meet the wishes of the target group. Remarkable, finally, is the fact that, unlike the later authors of profane histories, they put emphasis on the use of written documents and also the fact that they avoid using direct speech.[1]

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[1] Concerning the characteristics and the evolution of the genre of the early Christian Church history a rich literature exists. We refer only to the following studies: A. Momigliano, "Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century A.D.", in: A. Momigliano (ed.), *The Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity in the*

The three works which are entrusted to us here, viz. Gelasius of Caesarea, Rufinus of Aquileia and the *Historia acephala*, answer the general description given above. First, we will discuss the oldest of these texts, that of Gelasius, who wrote at the end of the fourth century. Then we will continue with a discussion of the two other texts both having their origins in the beginning of the fifth century: the text by Rufinus and the *Historia acephala*.

Gelasius of Caesarea

Scholars of Classical Antiquity, Early Christianity or the Byzantine era, none of them will deny the importance of Photius' *Bibliotheca* as a true literary museum. However, the number of problems this document presents is so to speak directly proportional to its importance: dating, division, sources, working method and Photius' reliability are all under discussion. Although in present times our knowledge has increased considerably, a lot remains uncertain. A fine example of this situation are *codices* 88–89 devoted to one or more authors called Gelasius.[2] The hypotheses concerning these *codices* are almost as numerous as the number of scholars which have dealt with them. Most of these hypotheses however were put forward without critical investigation of the *codices*. In 1987, however, J. Schamp has shown in two different publications[3] that at least some of these theories

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Fourth Century (Oxford, 1963), 79–99, reprinted in: A. Momigliano, *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Oxford, 1977), 107–126; R.A. Markus, "Church History and Early Church Historians", in: D. Baker (ed.), *The Material Sources and Methods of Ecclesiastical History*, *Studies in Church History* 11 (Oxford, 1975), 1–17; C. Siniscalco, "Storiografia cristiana", in: A. Di Berardino (ed.), *Dizionario patristico e di antichità cristiane*, II (Casale Monferrato, 1983), 3319–3326; F. Winkelmann, "Kirchengeschichtswerke", in: F. Winkelmann and W. Brandes, *Quellen zur Geschichte des frühen Byzanz (4.–9. Jahrhundert). Bestand und Probleme*, Berliner byzantinistische Arbeiten 55 (Berlin, 1990), 202–212; H. Leppin, "Von Constantin dem Großen zu Theodosius II. Das christliche Kaisertum bei den Kirchenhistorikern Socrates, Sozomenus und Theodoret", *Hypomnemata* 110 (Göttingen, 1996), 26–39; F. Winkelmann, "Zur nacheusebianischen christlichen Historiographie des 4. Jahrhunderts", in: C. Scholz – G. Makris (ed.), *Πολύπλευρος νοῦς. Miscellanea für P. Schreiner*, *Byzantinisches Archiv* 19 (Leipzig, 2000), 404–414.

[2] We have used the edition by R. Henry, *Photius. Bibliothèque*, II ("Codices" 84–185), *Collection byzantine* (Paris, 1960), 12–15. The problems posed by the interpretation of the text are to a large extent due to the imperfections of this edition. A new critical edition is much needed.

[3] Cf. his pioneering, but not always clearly formulated monograph *Photios. Historien*

should be rejected.[4] Τίς ποτε δέ ἐστιν ὁ Γελάσιος οὗτος, οὐκ ἔχω ἐκμαθεῖν, Photius exclaims desperately.[5] Desperation is indeed a very probable emotion after reading this passage, in which Photius deals with the *HE* of Gelasius of Cyzicus, frequently entitled *Syntagma*, with a certain Gelasius who wrote a *HE* and finally with a certain Gelasius who wrote a treatise *Contra Anomaeos*. In evaluating the style of each of these writings, he appreciates the *Contra Anomaeos* the most, followed by the *HE* by Gelasius of Caesarea. About the style of the *HE* by Gelasius of Cyzicus he does not have a good word to say. The general opinion today is that the first two Gelasii, i.e. the Gelasius who wrote the *Contra Anomaeos* and Gelasius of Caesarea, are in fact one and the same person.

Photius is also 'incontournable' for research into the life of Gelasius. The information he provides however is meagre and often open to several interpretations. He says[6] that Gelasius was a maternal cousin of Cyrillus of Jerusalem, the famous author of the *Κατηχήσεις μυσταγωγικαί* († 387). It was he who ca. 367 raised Gelasius to the estimable episcopal throne of Caesarea in Palestine. He was, however, dismissed in favour of the anomaean Euzoius by the imperial administration. Forced or not, we do not know, he leaves for Egypt. Ca. 379, after Theodosius I was crowned emperor, he succeeded in retrieving his episcopal throne. Furthermore, we know that he attended

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des lettres. La Bibliothèque *et ses notices biographiques*, *Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège* CCXLVIII (Paris, 1987), 395–412, especially 402–412 and his article "*Gélase ou Rufin: un fait nouveau. Sur des fragments oubliés de Gélase de Césarée* (CPG, *N*° *3521*)", *Byzantion* 57 (1987), 360–390. The findings of the latter were repeated in short in J. Schamp, "*The Lost Ecclesiastical History of Gelasius of Caesarea (CPG, 3521): Towards a reconsideration*", *The Patristic and Byzantine Review* 6 (1987), 146–152.

[4] For example the theory defended by some scholars that Photius only read the incipit or the introduction to Gelasius of Caesarea's *HE*. For this theory, see the old study by A. Glas, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia. Die Vorlage für die beiden letzten Bücher der Kirchengeschichte Rufins*, *Byzantinisches Archiv* 6 (Leipzig, 1914), 10, and more recently the publications by F. Winkelmann, e.g. "*Charakter und Bedeutung der Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia*", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 1 (1996) (*Polychordia. Festschrift F. Dölger zum 75. Geburtstag*) (Amsterdam, 1966), 346; *Untersuchungen zur Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia*, *Sitzungsberichte der deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Klasse für Sprachen, Literatur und Kunst* 1965, 3 (Berlin, 1966), 10–11 n. 6 (Winkelmann thinks Photius only read the *prooemium*). Others have in the past confused Gelasius of Caesarea with the Church historian Gelasius of Cyzicus, who is also mentioned in *codex* 88 of the *Bibliotheca*.

[5] Cf. p. 13, 35–36 in the edition by Henry.

[6] See *codex* 89, p. 15, 33–34 in the edition by Henry.

the oecumenical council of 381 and the synod of 394, both in Constantinople. Earlier on it was assumed that he died, or at least ended his career as a bishop, in the year 395.[7] Since, however, the first sources mentioning his successor, Eulogius, dates back only to the year 400, it is nowadays generally accepted that he died not much earlier than the year 400, if not in that year itself.[8]

Also as concerns his literary oeuvre one has to rely on Photius. Gelasius seems to have been the author of the above mentioned treatise *Contra Anomaeos* (*Κατὰ Ἀνομαίων*), which is entirely lost. Its subject fits in wonderfully well with the theological controversies of the last decades of the 4th century, i.e. the time when the goal of the orthodox party was to make an end to Arianism once and for all.

Furthermore, several florilegia attribute fragments to Gelasius, most of which deal with Christological problems. Exempli gratia we refer to what seems to be a confession of faith or an exposition about faith (κατὰ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν πρακτικὴ στοιχείωσις) found in the famous Byzantine florilegium the *Doctrina Patrum* and furthermore to the exegesis of some passages of the Old and New Testament.[9] All these writings are, save some fragments, lost, notwithstanding the fact that they proclaimed the orthodox faith. The insignificance or the rather colourless character of Gelasius as a theologian is probably to blame for this loss.

These theological texts possibly date back to the early period of Gelasius' life.[10]

Finally, Gelasius also edited anew the *HE* by Eusebius to which he added a long supplement carrying on Eusebius' work. This new *HE* (*CPG* 3521) was possibly written after the already mentioned *theologica*. According to Photius,[11] Gelasius divided his *HE* into three

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[7] This date was defended by e.g. A. Glas, *Kirchengeschichte*, 3–10 on the basis of the *Vita Porphyrii* written by the deacon Marcus and dated in the year 395. In this text a certain Iohannes is mentioned as metropolitan of Caesarea. Today, however, we know that the information in this *Vita* is completely fictitious.

[8] For the dying day of Gelasius, see especially F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen*, 71–72, and J. Schamp, "*Gélase ou Rufin*", 370–371.

[9] Seventeen fragments, mostly of dogmatic nature are listed in the *CPG* (see number 3520). They were collected by F. Diekamp, *Analecta Patristica. Texte und Abhandlungen zur griechischen Patristik*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 117 (Roma, 1938), 44–49.

[10] Cf. F. Winkelmann, "*Charakter und Bedeutung*", 365 (between 365/366 and 378/379).

[11] See *codex* 88, p. 12, 30–p. 13, 29.

tómoi and devoted special attention to the oecumenical council of 325 and especially to the leading figures in the debates at that council, furthermore to the condemnation of Arius and the subsequent reaction of Arius' followers and finally to the ignominious end of the heretic's life in a public latrine.

Until the beginning of the 20th century it was thought that this *HE* was lost once and for all, since no manuscripts containing this text have come down to us. Very likely, it has fallen into oblivion due to the large Church histories of the fifth century, as there are those by Socrates, by Sozomenus and by Theodoretus.

Still scholars, especially A. Glas, P. Heseler and F. Scheidweiler, think that later Church historians often used Gelasius' history and that it is possible to reconstruct it on the basis of these later Church histories. Friedhelm Winkelmann has made this reconstruction his life's work.[12] In different publications he has gathered and studied all testimonies of the *HE* by Gelasius of Caesarea. He thinks it is possible to reconstruct the most part of it, although probably not *verbatim*. His final goal is the edition of this reconstruction. Hopefully, this aim will once be achieved.[13] That this edition keeps us waiting such a long time is obviously due to the fact that the reconstruction of a lost writing is extremely difficult and even dangerous, especially because literal quotations are seldom found. We are confident that such a final critical edition would stimulate the research into the working methods, the sources and the interrelations between the different Church histories that have come down to us.

What are the most important texts that serve as a basis for Winkelmann? First of all, we have the indications offered by Photius, the value of which is, according to J. Schamp,[14] still underestimated by the German scholar. Reference has to be made also to the following historical texts: the *Syntagma* by Gelasius of Cyzicus (from the

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[12] See especially his *Untersuchungen*, of which the findings were summarized in two other of his articles: "*Charakter und Bedeutung*", 348–356 and "*Zu einer Edition der Fragmente der Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia*", *Byzantinoslavica* 34 (1973), 193–198.

[13] Only then studies like that of S. Borgehammar, *How the Holy Cross was found. From Event to Medieval Legend, Bibliotheca Theologiae Practicae* 47 (Stockholm, 1991), especially 7–55, a study based explicitly upon Gelasius of Caesarea, would have a more firm and certain starting point.

[14] Cf. J. Schamp, "*Gélase ou Rufin*", 382–390, collected the four passages in which Photius deals with the *HE* of Gelasius of Caesarea. To these passages he added a French translation and an elaborated commentary.

end of the fifth century), which repeats to a large extent the *HE* by Gelasius of Caesarea;[15] books X and XI of the Church history by Rufinus, to which we will return immediately; the *Chronicon* by Georgius Monachus Hamartolus, ending in the year 867. Furthermore, some hagiographic texts have to be mentioned here: first of all the *Vita* of Alexander and Metrophanes (*BHG* 1279), which is of utmost importance for the reconstruction of the *HE* by Gelasius although it seems that this hagiography, in which the text of the *HE* is quoted fairly literally, used only a summary of the *HE*;[16] furthermore the pre-metaphrastic Life of Athanasius (*BHG* 185)[17] and finally a part of the *Vita Spyridonis* by Theodorus of Paphus (*BHG* 1647).[18] In two manuscripts, viz. *Oxoniensis, Baroccianus gr. 142* and *Parisinus gr. 1555*, which each contain a Church historical epitomè, some excerpts are found taken from the preface to the *HE*.

A difficult problem is still the relationship between the two books Rufinus added to his translation of the *HE* by Eusebius, i.e. books X and XI, on the one hand and the *HE* by Gelasius on the other hand: are Rufinus' books X and XI a translation of the *HE* by Gelasius, or is it the other way round? Ever since this problem was brought up for discussion in 1914 in the dissertation by A. Glas,[19] it has been troubling the scholarly community,[20] to the extent even that the famous Byzantine scholar Ernest Honigmann exclaimed despairingly:[21] "There are some scientific problems, as the relationship between Gelasius and Rufinus, which have been hopelessly com-

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[15] In this context read especially F. Winkelmann, "*Die Quellen der Historia Ecclesiastica des Gelasius von Cyzicus (nach 475). Ein Beitrag zur Rekonstruktion der Kirchengeschichte des Gelasius von Caesarea*", *Byzantinoslavica* 27 (1966), 104–130 and F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen*, 27–46. It appears, however, that Gelasius of Cyzicus frequently altered his model.

[16] About the importance of this text for Gelasius' *HE*, see F. Scheidweiler, *"Die Bedeutung der 'Vita Metrophanis et Alexandri' für die Quellenkritik bei den griechischen Kirchenhistorikern*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 50 (1957), 74–98, and F. Winkelmann, *"Untersuchungen"*, 20–25. This text, written in Constantinople in the 5th century, was edited critically by F. Winkelmann, "*Vita Metrophanis et Alexandri BHG 1279*", *Analecta Bollandiana* 100 (1982), 147–183.

[17] Cf. F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen*, 47–49.

[18] Cf. F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen*, 66–69.

[19] *Die Kirchengeschichte*.

[20] A good survey of the discussion and a further investigation is found in E. Honigmann, "*Gélase de Césarée et Rufin d'Aquilée*", *Bulletin de la Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques de l'Académie royale de Belgique* 5e Série, tome XL (Bruxelles, 1954), 122–161, and in F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen*, 70–102.

[21] E. Honigmann, "*Gélase de Césarée*", 122.

plicated by modern scholars that they can't be solved, so it seems".

At the forefront of this discussion is the following statement by Photius:[22] "In reading other sources, we for our part have found that Cyrillus himself and Gelasius who is under discussion here have translated the historical work by the Latin author Rufinus into Greek, but that they did not write a historical work of their own". Did Gelasius translate the text of Rufinus?[23] On the one hand we have pointed to the fact that Cyrillus died in 387 and Gelasius in 400 or a little earlier; on the other hand we know that Rufinus started writing his *HE* only after the invasion of Italy by Alaric, in other words after November 18th 401.[24] The conclusion is inevitably that there cannot have been any influence of Rufinus on the *HE* by Gelasius. But what then is the meaning of Photius' words? This remains a mystery. Did Photius found his opinion as so often on his memory, thus making a mistake? Or was his aim more malicious and did he want to make Gelasius' *HE* appear in an unfavourable light by presenting it as plagiarism? For indeed as we have seen Gelasius' *HE* was not highly esteemed by Photius. In any case that the already mentioned Cyrillus of Jerusalem is found in the same context, for, as Photius reports,[25] it was he who encouraged his cousin Gelasius to write a Church history and thus to continue chronologically the *HE* by Eusebius.

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[22] See p. 15, 35–39 in the edition by Henry: —Ἡμεῖς δὲ εὕρομεν, ἀνεγνωκότες ἐν ἄλλοις, ὅτι αὐτός τε Κύριλλος καὶ Γελάσιος οὗτος τὴν Ῥουφίνου τοῦ Ῥωμαίου μετέφρασαν ἱστορίαν εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν, οὐ μέντοι ἰδίαν συνετάξαντο ἱστορίαν.

[23] For example the following scholars think that this is indeed the case: F. Diekamp, *Analecta Patristica*, 21–22 and 27–32, and also P. van den Ven in different publications, viz. "*Fragments de la récension grecque de l'Histoire ecclésiastique de Rufin dans un texte hagiographique*", *Le Muséon* 33 (1915), 92–105; "*Encore le Rufin grec*", *Le Muséon* 59 (1946), 281–294; *La légende de S. Spyridon évêque de Trimithonte*, *Bibliothèque du Muséon* 33 (Leuven, 1953), 14*–43*. P. van den Ven thinks that Rufinus was the author of the two added books and that Gelasius of Caesarea translated them into Greek ("le Rufin grec") and that it was this Greek Rufinus which was used by a number of Church historians, among others by the great 5th century triumvirate, Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoretus. Today, however, this theory is generally rejected.

[24] See Rufinus, in the *Prologus* to his *HE*, p. 951 in the edition by Th. Mommsen: *tempore, quo diruptis Italiae claustris Alarico duce Gothorum se pestifer morbus infudit et agros armenta viros longe lateque vastavit.* As a matter of fact, it was a habit of Rufinus to mention in his prologues the circumstances in which he made his translation, the person by order of whom the translation was made and the sort of readers it was intended for.

[25] See p. 15, 33–35 in the edition by Henry. For the explanation of this passage, we refer to E. Honigmann, "*Gélase de Césarée*", 130–133, and to the studies of J. Schamp.

But what about the other possiblity? Did Rufinus save for some slight alterations and additions repeat Gelasius' *HE* in writing the two extra books in which he carries on Eusebius' *HE* until the death of the emperor Theodosius I? This position was taken for the first time by A. Glas[26] and subsequently by others, e.g. by the Gelasius specialist F. Winkelmann.[27] J. Schamp,[28] however, rejects the possibility that Rufinus used Gelasius. First of all the reference has to be made to ten passages where Rufinus states that he got his information first hand.[29] Furthermore, Schamp says founding his opinion on Photius, Gelasius ended his *HE* already with the death of Arius under the reign of Constantius II (337–361). In other words, the subject of Rufinus' last two books is not dealt with in the Gelasius' *HE*. So, in short, far-reaching influence of Gelasius on Rufinus has to be ruled out, according to Schamp. If this is correct, Winkelmann loses a source of primary importance for his reconstruction of Gelasius' *HE*. However, we do not find Schamp's argumentation completely satisfactory, and we think it difficult to pass final judgment in this debate. In any case, Gelasius being influenced by Rufinus is simply impossible.

In connection with this controversy we have to refer also to the theory defended by E. Honigmann.[30] According to this theory, before the year 451, so before the *Syntagma* of Gelasius of Cyzicus, an anonymous author composed some sort of *Historia bipartita* or *tripartita*, for which he used a Greek translation of books X and XI of Rufinus, Gelasius of Caesarea and probably also some other texts. The same thing happened later on with Theodorus Lector and Cassiodorus. According to Honigmann now, this is how one should explain the words of Photius. However, the studies by F. Scheidweiler,[31] F. Winkelmann[32] and J. Schamp[33] have shown that this solution cannot be accepted.

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[26] *Kirchengeschichte*, 10–79.

[27] See especially his *Untersuchungen*, 70–102 and later also P. Nautin, "*Gélase, évêque de Césarée de Palestine*", in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques* 20 (Paris, 1984), 300–301. Winkelmann goes more deeply into the stilistic argumentation of others (A. Glas, F. Scheidweiler, F. Diekamp, P. van den Ven and E. Honigmann). Stylistic arguments lead nowhere.

[28] As well in his book (408–412) as in his 1987 article (371–376).

[29] Cf. F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen*, 72–76.

[30] "*Gélase de Césarée*", 122–161, especially 134–136.

[31] Review of P. van den Ven, *La légende de S. Spyridon, évêque de Trimithonte*, *Bibliothèque du Muséon* 33 (Louvain, 1953), *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 48 (1955), 162–164 (Nachwort).

[32] *Untersuchungen*, 97–99.

[33] "*Gélase ou Rufin*", 379–380.

Gelasius' *HE* is highly important,[34] as it is, after Eusebius, the only major Church history in the 4th century. After all, beside this we only have some official documents and the works of Athanasius of Alexandria. The author personally witnessed the Arian controversy, which was so typical of the 4th century. The historians of the 5th century also speak of this controversy, but for them this was already history. However, his importance may not be overestimated either. The way in which he depicts Arianism is rather clichéd and he does not pursue the questions of the essence and the evolution of the controversy. Without distinction the arians are charged with heresy, they are maliciously called φιλόσοφοι and are put on a par with the heathens. The ambiguous attitude of his predecessors in Caesarea, however, is kept quiet.

Explicitly Gelasius refers to Eusebius as his paragon. As Eusebius, his predecessor on the episcopal see of Caesarea, he uses a lot of official documents. Emperor Constantinus the Great and his parents Constantius Chlorus, with whom he starts his account, and Helena he holds in special reverence. As in the *Vita Constantini* and in the *Laus Constantini*, Constantinus is depicted as the ideal Christian emperor, his reign as a refuge for those who want to dedicate themselves to God and his faith and conduct as impeccable and beyond reproach: he is without shortcomings and especially without cruelty. In short, Gelasius, consciously or not, falsified the historical truth and hushed up the criticism passed on the emperor by Christians as well as by heathens.

Gelasius' *HE* is a typical example of pious literature. It is therefore not surprising that legends and miracles of edifying nature colour the account. Gelasius wants to add to Eusebius' Church history precisely by making use of pious and legendary sources, which were somewhat neglected by Eusebius. Every page attests to a strong faith in God's miraculous powers.

Besides, Gelasius' *HE* gives the impression of being unfinished a sign of which are the many inconsistencies and contradictions. For example, the official documents which are quoted have not been organically incorporated into the whole and some of the leading figures at the council of Nicaea (325) whose actions are discussed in

[34] For the characteristics of Gelasius' *HE*, read F. Winkelmann, "*Charakter und Bedeutung*", 356–374.

detail, have not been mentioned in the list of the most important bishops at the council.

Theologically Gelasius' *HE* is on the same wavelength as the *symbolum* and the canons of the Nicaean council. This, however, is no proof of a deeply rooted theological conviction, because more often than not Gelasius appears not to be apt or willing to engage in deep and difficult theological speculations. He confines himself to a number of dogmas using them regularly as a confession of faith.

Eusebius' *HE* and his *Vita Constantini* served as sources.[35] Moreover, Gelasius calls upon oral information. He seems not to have used the works by Athanasius despite his infinite admiration for this advocate of orthodoxy. For the documents he quotes Gelasius could certainly fall back on the rich library at Caesarea.

All in all Gelasius' *HE* is no masterpiece. It is remarkable that, despite the large amount of information available in Caesarea, he was not able to deliver a more richly elaborated Church history.

Rufinus of Aquileia

The second Church history we have to deal with here, is the most famous of the three. It is the one written by Tyrannius Rufinus, the well-known Christian author and translator (*CPG* 3495).

We are rather well-informed about the course of his life.[36] Rufinus was born circa 345 in Iulia Concordia, a small town between Altinum and Aquileia. His family seems to have been wealthy. Between 358/360 and 366/368 he received a thorough grammatical and rhetorical training. He was highly interested in the pagan Latin literature. In the early seventies he lived in a monastic community at Aquileia under the inspiring leadership of Chromatius, the future bishop of the town. During his stay there he was baptized, thus going officially into the Church and he was able to gain more in-depth knowledge of the Christian Latin authors. At the latest in the year 373 Rufinus traveled to the eastern part of the Mediterranean,

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[35] Cf. F. Winkelmann, "*Charakter und Bedeutung*", 374–380.

[36] This sketch of Rufinus' life is based upon the book of F.X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411). His Life and Works*, *The Catholic University of America. Studies in Mediaeval History*, N.S. 6 (Washington, 1945). Moreover, we have used a recent *status quaestionis* by F. Thelamon, *Rufin d'Aquilée*, in: *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, XIII (Paris, 1988), 1107–1112.

more exactly to Alexandria. Either there or in the Egyptian desert he lived for 8 years. During this period he was influenced especially by Didymus the Blind and he met the great ascetics of his time, Serapion, the two Macarii, Poimèn, Pambo and many others. Not afraid of travelling to most remote monastic communities, he visited not only the chora in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, but also the Kellia in the desert of Nitria and even Skètè in the Libyan desert. But he travelled also to other parts of the Middle East: we know that he visited Antioch in the summer of 374 and that he also went to Edessa. In 381 he retreated to a monastery on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. He took charge of the monastery and brought it to great prosperity. He trod on dangerous ground, mainly as a result of his translation of Origen' *Περὶ ἀρχῶν* and got involved in the Origenist controversy. Indeed, his admiration for Origenes got him into trouble. It resulted in a fierce polemic with Hieronymus, with whom he had spent part of his youth, first as a student in Rome and later in the ascetic-spiritual community of Aquileia.[37] In 397 he left Jerusalem for the monastery of Pinetum in the neighbourhood of Rome and a little later he went to Aquileia—he left Rome before Easter 399 but seems to have returned there quite regularly. But even there he was accused of his alleged Origenist opinions thus coming into conflict with his old friend Hieronymus again. The second phase of the controversy was even more bitter. The greater part of his translations were done in Aquileia. The threat of the Goths led by Alaric was so imminent that Rufinus was forced to flee southwards, more exactly to Sicily, together with a group of faithful followers.[38] There he died between October 411 and the spring of 412.

Rufinus left a vast body of literary work, which, however, we cannot dwell upon too long in this article. Besides a number of original works, often dealing with the Origenist controversy and with Rufinus' polemic with Hieronymus,[39] especially his many translations

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[37] The controversy with Hieronymus was not only about the alleged origenism of Rufinus (until now, says Hieronymus in a tone of reproach, nobody has been so rash as to translate Origenes' *Περὶ ἀρχῶν*), but also about the question to what extent Christian authors may use the literature of the pagan antiquity.

[38] Earlier on it was thought that this flight only took place in 407. Now we know that it already happened in 402/403. See C.P. Hammond, "*The Last Ten Years of Rufinus' Life and the Date of his Move South from Aquileia*", *The Journal of Theological Studies* 28 (1977), 372–429.

[39] Cf. *CPL* 195–201.

call for our attention. In this context we refer to the *Asceticon* by Basilius of Caesarea, nine *Orationes* by Gregory of Nazianzus, the *Ad monachos* and the *Ad virginem* by Evagrius Ponticus, the collecion of proverbs by Sextus, the pseudo-Clementine *Recognitiones*, the exegetic ὁμιλίαι by Origenes on several books of the Bible (*Genesis, Numbers, Judges, Canticum, Josue, Epistle to the Romans*, etc.).

But his possibly most famous translation is that of the *HE* by Eusebius of Caesarea, of which we know the immediate cause. When Alaric crossed the Alps in 401 and looted Italy until the first months of 402, Chromatius, the Bishop of Aquilea, asked Rufinus to translate the Eusebius' *HE* in order to morally support the Christians of Aquileia during the siege of the city by Alaric.[40] The aim of the translation was to stimulate the citizens to think over the events of the past, thus making them forget the sufferings of that moment. Rufinus accepted, convinced as he was of the comforting and even therapeutic value of his writings.[41]

He translated the first nine books of Eusebius' *HE* and gave a short summary of the tenth book. The result was a ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία starting from the founding of the Church till the victory of Constantinus over Licinius in the year 324. To this Rufinus himself added two books, in which the events are told from the middle of the reign of Constantine the Great till the death of Theodosius I in the year 395.[42]

The text of Rufinus *HE* was edited by Theodor Mommsen on the basis of a thorough study of the textual tradition. Yet there is still a lot of work to be done. In 1984 a new important manuscript was discovered. It is a mutilated bifolium from an old parchment codex, now preserved in the library of Trinity College in Dublin. It contains some words of the preface and the chapters 1, 2, 3 and 11 of book X.[43]

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[40] About this, read the *Prologus* to his translation of Eusebius' *HE* (p. 951): *iniungis mihi ut ecclesiasticam historiam, quam vir eruditissimus Eusebius Caesariensis Graeco sermone conscripsit, in Latinum verterem, cuius lectione animus audientium vinctus, dum notitiam rerum gestarum avidus petit, oblivionem quodammodo malorum quae gererentur accipperet.*

[41] He expresses this conviction also elsewhere, for example in his translation of the book of the Bible book *Numeri*.

[42] Earlier on in this article we have already entered at lenghth into the old controversy about the two supplementary books. Some think Rufinus only translated Gelasius of Caesarea's *HE*, while others state that it is the other way around, viz. that Gelasius translated Rufinus. Today, however, the opinion is gradually winning acceptance that both Gelasius' *HE* and the two books of Rufinus' *HE* are independent and original works.

[43] Cf. A. Breen, "*A New Irish Fragment of the* Continuatio *to Rufinus-Eusebius* Historia

Moreover, recent studies[44] have shown that Mommsen overlooked several manuscripts. The need for a new critical edition is therefore quite obvious.

There is still a lot of uncertainty about Rufinus' sources. For the first nine books Eusebius' influence cannot be overlooked. As to the additions in this first part, as well as to the two supplementary books the situation is less clear. Rufinus says he used oral sources,[45] to which one can undoubtedly add the information gathered in libraries and archives. It seems likely that he read and used the works of Appianus and Arrianus.[46] He does not seem to have known the *Historia acephala*, despite his long stay in Egypt.

In Byzantium Rufinus' *HE* was freely used by Sozomenus, as well as by Socrates, who nevertheless often criticized him, especially about his chronology,[47] and by Gelasius of Cyzicus. In the West historiography was even more clearly influenced by Rufinus. We refer for example to Augustinus,[48] Paulinus of Nola, Iulianus of Aeclanum,[49] Quodvultdeus,[50] Victor Vitensis[51] and Orosius.

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ecclesiastica", *Scriptorium* 41 (1987), 185–204; C.P. Hammond Bammel, "*Das neue Rufinfragment in irischer Schrift und die Überlieferung der Rufin'schen Übersetzung der Kirchengeschichte Eusebs*", in: R. Gryson (ed.), *Philologia Sacra. Biblische und patristische Studien für H.J. Frede und W. Thiele zu ihrem siebzigsten Geburtstag*, *Vetus Latina* 24/2, II (Freiburg, 1993), 483–513. This fragment, of which the archetype probably dated from the 6th century, offers an excellent text.

[44] Especially the study by C.P. Hammond Bammel referred to in the previous note, 491–510.

[45] Cf. A. Glas, *Kirchengeschichte*, 16–18.

[46] M. Pucci, "*Some historical remarks on Rufinus'* Historia ecclesiastica (H.E., *IV, 2, 1–5*)", *Rivista storica dell'Antichità* 11 (1981), 123–128, has demonstrated this for the account of the Jewish uprising under emperor Traianus.

[47] For this read F. Geppert, *Die Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Socrates Scholasticus*, *Studien zur Geschichte der Theologie und der Kirche* III, 4 (Leipzig, 1898; repr. Aalen, 1972), 19–23; Th. Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople. Historian of Church and State* (Ann Arbor, 1997), 51–52; M. Wallraff, *Der Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates. Untersuchungen zur Geschichtsdarstellung. Methode und Person*, *Forschungen zur Kirchen-und Dogmengeschichte* 68 (Göttingen, 1997), 188–191.

[48] Cf. Y.-M. Duval, "*L'éloge de Théodose dans la* Cité de Dieu *(V, 26, 1): Sa place, son sens, ses sources*", *Recherches augustiniennes* 4 (1966), 135–179; P. Courcelle, "*Jugements de Rufin et de saint Augustin sur les empereurs du IV^e siècle et la défaite suprême du paganisme*", *Revue des études augustiniennes* 71 (1969), 100–130.

[49] Cf. Y.-M. Duval, "*Julien d'Éclane et Rufin d'Aquilée. Du Concile de Rimini à la répression pélagienne. L'intervention impériale en matière religieuse*", *Revue des études augustiniennes* 24 (1978), 243–271.

[50] Read e.g. Y.-M. Duval, "*Un nouveau lecteur probable de l'*Histoire ecclésiastique *de Rufin d'Aquilée: l'auteur du* Liber promissionum et praedictorum Dei", *Latomus* 26 (1967), 762–777; F. Thelamon, "*Sérapis et le baiser du soleil. Les truquages du Sérapeum d'Alexandrie selon Rufin et Quodvultdeus*", *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 5 (1973), 227–250.

[51] For this Latin historian and bishop of Vita (end of the 5th century) Rufinus'

Rufinus is considered as the first great Church historian of the Latin Church.[52] He was directly influenced by Eusebius, but not to the extent that his work is a servile imitation. It clearly bears the stamp of his personality, partly because the political and religious situation was completely different from that in the time of Eusebius. In trying to explain the events to his readers Rufinus stresses the fact that it is God who leads us along our way and who will save us eventually. The world is the stage of God's power. The history of the Church brings the people of God to the fore while building the kingdom of God. It is therefore not surprising that Rufinus pays much attention to all sorts of signs by which God inscribes, so to speak, his will and intention of salvation in nature and in the world.[53] Thus, Rufinus' *HE* is no historiography in the narrow sense of the word. It has some of the characteristics of hagiography as well.

The historical information provided by Rufinus is sometimes very accurate and of great importance. At other times, however, it is negligible, especially when we have other sources. The purely political and military events are only hinted at, although Rufinus frequently stresses the importance for the imperium of the harmonious coexistence of State and Church. This thought of the *Pax Constantiniana* was developed by Eusebius and by Rufinus and coloured the later Church histories.[54] The true faith has to be promoted, false religions banned: according to Rufinus Judaism, heathenism and all sorts of heresies are finished permanently.[55]

Another subject that is frequently broached is that of the ideal Christian emperor. For Rufinus it is Theodosius I who should be

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HE is the model par excellence; cf. Ph. Wynn, "*Rufinus of Aquileia's Ecclesiastical History and Victor of Vita's History of the Vandal Persecution*", *Classica et Mediaevalia* 41 (1990), 187–198.

[52] To evaluate Rufinus' *HE* we have based ourselves upon the masterly work by F. Thelamon, *Païens et chrétiens au IV^e siècle: L'apport de "l'Histoire ecclésiastique" de Rufin d'Aquilée*, *Études augustiniennes* (Paris, 1981). She especially dilates upon the differences between heathens and Christians, as they are treated of in Rufinus' *HE*. However, it may not be forgotten that this *HE* can also be looked at from other points of view. One of those is the opposition between Romans and barbarians. It was treated of in the excellent aricle by G. Zecchini, "*Barbari e Romani in Rufino di Concordia*", in: *Rufino di Concordia e il suo tempo. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Concordia-Portogruaro, 18–21 settembre 1986, Antichità Altoadriatiche* 31, 2 (Udine, 1987), 29–60.

[53] This aspect is given special attention in the book by Thelamon, *Païens et chrétiens*, 325–458, and in the article by L. Dattrino, "*La conversione al Cristianesimo secondo la* Historia ecclesiastica *di Rufino (345–410/411)*", *Augustinianum* 27 (1987), 247–280.

[54] See e.g. I, 33–40 and II, 22–34.

[55] For Rufinus' attitude towards history, see Thelamon, "*Rufin d'Aquilée*", in: *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, 1114–1115.

imitated[56] and who is compared to bad emperors, whether incurable heathens, heretics or persecutors. Especially the usurper Eugenius (392–394)[57] has to lie at the feet of the great and pious emperor Theodosius. The comparisons are black-and-white and over-simplified. The thought that the good are rewarded, the bad punished was taken from Eusebius.[58]

Rufinus, who undeniably played an important role in the history of the Church in the second half of the 5th century, was already a controversial figure in his own time.[59] Whilst Hieronymus, his old friend, attacks him furiously, others, like Paulinus of Nola or Palladius, write warmly about him. Also Gaudentius of Brescia, Chromatius of Aquileia and the two Melanias were in close contact with him.

The same situation is found in modern research. Rufinus is both praised and despised.

Rufinus' translations[60] made available in the West the rich early Christian Greek literature he had got acquainted with while travelling in the East. The role he played as mediator between the East

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[56] See e.g. II, 17–19 and 31–34. For this, read the following articles: Y.-M. Duval, "*L'éloge*", 144–168; P. Courcelle, "*Jugements*", 100–130; Thelamon, "*L'empereur idéal d'après l'*Histoire ecclésiastique *de Rufin d'Aquilée*", in: F.L. Cross (ed.), *Studia Patristica*, X, *Texte und Untersuchungen* 107 (Berlin, 1970), 310–314; F.J. Lomas, "*Teodosio, paradigma de príncipe cristiano: consideraciones de Ambrosio, Rufino de Aquileya y Augustín sobre la imperial persona*", *Studia historica, historia antigua* 8 (1990), 149–165.

[57] This vision on Eugenius was adopted by Rufinus' contemporaries and his later colleagues. Cf. J. Szidat, "*Die Usurpation des Eugenius*", *Historia* 28 (1979), 487–508.

[58] Cf. G.W. Trompf, "*Rufinus and the Logic of Retribution in Post-Eusebian Church Histories*", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 43 (1992), 351–371.

[59] For Rufinus as a controversial figure in antiquity and in modern literature, see e.g. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia*, IX–XVIII, and Thelamon, "*Rufin d'Aquilée*", in: *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, 1112–1113.

[60] The literature dealing with Rufinus' translations and his translation technique is extremely rich. For a bibliography of the literature before the year 1970, see F. Winkelmann, "*Einige Bemerkungen zu den Aussagen des Rufinus von Aquileia und des Hieronymus über ihre Übersetzungstheorie und -Methode*", in: P. Granfield and J.A. Jungmann (eds.), *Kyriakon. Festschrift J. Quasten*, II (Münster, 1970), 532 n. 1. Here we focus especially upon these studies which deal with the *HE* in particular. For a sound and nuanced approach of Rufinus' translation technique, we refer to e.g. J.E.L. Oulton, "*Rufinus's Translation of the Church History of Eusebius*", *The Journal of Theological Studies* 30 (1929), 150–174; the dissertation by M.M. Wagner, *Rufinus, the Translator. A Study of his Theory and his Practice as illustrated in his Version of the* Apologetica *of St. Gregory Nazianzen*, *The Catholic University of America. Patristic Studies* 73 (Washington, 1945); and the recent study by T. Christensen, *Rufinus of Aquileia and the* Historia Ecclesiastica, *Lib. VIII–IX, of Eusebius*, *Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Historisk-filosofiske Meddelelser* 58 (Copenhagen, 1989), in which an older article "*Rufinus of Aquileia and the* Historia Ecclesiastica, *lib. VIII–IX, of Eusebius*", *Studia Theologica* 34 (1980), 129–152 is further developed.

and the West cannot be denied. It is his merit that we still have access to a number of texts of the early Christian Greek literature. For example, a lot of works by Origen of which the original Greek text is lost are available in the Latin translation by Rufinus.

His translations are judged positively by for example J.E.L. Oulton[61] and F.X. Murphy,[62] especially in these cases where Rufinus adds new information to the text of Eusebius, e.g. about the careers of Clemens of Alexandria and Origen, or about the places he visited himself. But, as already said, he is also, and sometimes heavily, criticised. M. Villain[63] for example states: "Ni le sens critique, ni la méthode n'étaient l'apanage du prêtre d'Aquilée". These scholars have a poor opinion about the literary and historical value of Rufinus' work and they blame him his heretic opinions, considering him as Pelagius' predecessor. Other scholars try to prove, just like Hieronymus before them, that Rufinus consciously falsified or adapted the works he translated. Indeed, it cannot be denied that Rufinus frequently intervened to clear some passages or that he even eliminated some passages which he considered unorthodox or interpolated. We should bear in mind, however, that rather than trying to translate a text verbatim, Rufinus' intention was to get the spirit of the Greek originals across to his readers. As he himself stated several times in the prefaces to his many translations, he aimed at a translation that reads smoothly, at an explanatory adaptation. He used this method he says because it was the only way in which he could stimulate the spiritual and monastic education of his Western contemporaries. According to Rufinus, a *HE* has besides this pedagogic task also the assignment to just give information, e.g. in the field of theology and dogmatics.

Therefore, it is a foregone conclusion that Rufinus translated Eusebius' *HE* very freely. This causes some scholars to consider Rufinus' work as unimportant and useless for understanding and interpreting the sometimes difficult text of Eusebius. It is important, however, to keep in mind that during the Middle Ages in the West not Eusebius' *HE* was used as the main source for the history of the early Church, but Rufinus' free translation. Thus Y.-M. Duval calls Rufinus' *HE* a "bréviaire historique de l'Occident",[64] of great importance to both his own contemporaries and later generations.

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[61] "*Rufinus*", 150–174.
[62] "*Rufinus*", 158–175.
[63] "*Rufin d'Aquilée et l'Histoire ecclésiastique*", *Recherches de science religieuse* 33 (1946), 186.
[64] Cf. Y.-M. Duval, "*Julien d'Éclane*", 269–270.

A great merit of Rufinus whose knowledge of the Greek language is remarkable, is to have contacted the Latin-speaking Church with an important Greek Christian literature.

Interesting also is to investigate how Rufinus put the events into words for his Latin readers. It becomes even more interesting when one comes to realize that Rufinus' text frequently deviates from the Greek text and that the latter was only a means to give a personal account of things, in which ideas and opinions different from those of Eusebius could be ventilated. He considered the history of the Church of his own time as a reproduction of the history of the first centuries described by Eusebius; so he draws a parallel between the reigns of Constantine and Theodosius I, both periods of mission, persecutions, divisions of heresy and of final salvation. In his study T. Christensen has convincingly shown that Rufinus' *HE* should be considered as an independent piece of work.

His most important motif to intervene is his wish to present to his readers a text which is clear and can be immediately understood. Moreover, he wants to bring more into prominence the theological and moral lessons that can be drawn from history. Therefore, Eusebius' periods are cut into smaller sentences and vague words and expressions are replaced with clearly formulated terms. Whenever Eusebius is too long-winded Rufinus intervenes and shortens the original. Useless repetitions and ideas that are not to the point, are removed. On the other hand, he is not afraid of adding clarifying explanations whenever needed. The line of reasoning and the parts of the discussion are made more explicit. Historical information that is totally or partly faulty is corrected and contradictions are avoided.

Finally, it is obvious that Rufinus pays a great deal of attention to the polemic with the heathens, which does not prevent him from going into detail about the heathen customs and rites. These detailed descriptions are invaluable for historians of religion. Extremely important for example is Rufinus' account of the devastation of the Serapeum in Alexandria and his description of the cults in the Egyptian capital.[65] Also interesting is his finely tuned judgment of emperor Julian.[66]

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[65] In this context, see Y.-M. Duval, "*Un nouveau lecteur*", 762–777; Thelamon, "*Sérapis et le baiser*", 227–250; Ead., *Païens et chrétiens*, 165–205; A. Baldini, "*Problemi della tradizione sulla 'distruzione' del Serapeo di Alessandria*", *Rivista storica dell'Antichità* 15 (1985), 97–152; Thelamon, "*Destruction du paganisme et construction du royaume de Dieu d'après Rufin et Augustin*", *Cristianesimo nella storia* 11 (1990), 523–544.

[66] Cf. R.J. Penella, "*Julian the Persecutor in Fifth Century Church Historians*", *The Ancient World* 24 (1993), 31–43.

The Historia acephala

For the *Historia acephala*, the third and last document we deal with here, we dispose of a recent critical edition (*CPG* 2119; *BHL* 727n), wich was edited in 1985 by Annik Martin[67] and replaces the old *editio princeps* by Scipione Maffei from the year 1738[68] and the later attempts by P. Batiffol, H. Fromen, C.H. Turner and H.G. Opitz.[69] The edition of the text poses serious problems, which are caused by the fact that there is only one manuscript of the text.[70] Each editor knows what it means having to deal with a *codex unicus*. Especially the idiom (phonetics, orthography, morphology and syntax) is specific to the codex and causes the editor serious problems.[71]

The Greek original is lost, but we still have a Latin translation. In the beginning of the 5th century an official or semi-official Church history seems to have existed in Alexandria which began with the Meletian schism and ended with the episcopacy of Theophilus. The *Historia acephala* seems to have been a part of this.[72] Its author, probably a clergyman of the Church of Alexandria, drew up the text after the death of Athanasius (May 3rd 373). In doing so he must have examined closely the ecclesiastic archives of his city.[73] We know that these archives were augmented every day and that therefore they must have contained an incredible mass of information. The *Historia acephala* is indeed extremely well documented.

In this respect a special theory has to mentioned. It was defended

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[67] *Histoire "acéphale" et Index syriaque des Lettres festales d'Athanase d'Alexandrie*, SCh 317 (Paris, 1985), 137–169. A review of this book was made by R. Lorenz, "*Autour de l'*Histoire acéphale *et de sa dernière édition*", *Revue des études augustiniennes* 34 (1988), 267–273.

[68] This edition was repeated by cardinal A. Mai, whose edition was then used by Migne (PG 26, 1443–1450).

[69] A concordance of the texts of some of these editions is found in T.D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius. Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Massachusetts/London, 1993), 233–234.

[70] Characteristic of this precarious situation are the many conjectures proposed by the subsequent editors and which are found in the critical apparatus of the SCh edition.

[71] That is why in the introduction to the SCh edition a long chapter is devoted to this problem (107–121). Contrary to Batiffol, the editor did not opt for a diplomatic edition.

[72] This theory is dilated upon and given firm foundations by T. Orlandi, "*Ricerche su una storia ecclesiastica alessandrina del IV sec.*", *Vetera Christianorum* 11 (1974), 269–312.

[73] For the sources of this text, see H. Fromen, *Historia acephala*, 10–33.

by P. Batiffol.[74] Nowadays, however, it is generally rejected. According to Batiffol, the text is the centre of the *Synodikon*, a collection of documents, according to Socrates, brought together by Athanasius and ordered chronologically. Batiffol thinks the *Synodikon* came down to us partially in the form of the *Historia acephala* and that the latter was originally a collection of documents of different nature, which were later on used by Church historians like Socrates, Sozomenus,[75] Gelasius of Cyzicus and Theodoretus. Today, however, we know that only Sozomenus[76] and Theodoretus used the *Historia acephala*.[77]

The Greek original seems to have been achieved in different phases. What we are referring to are first of all the addition of the consular dates until the death of Athanasius, furthermore the digressions concerning the Church history of Antioch and Constantinople, and finally the chronological appendix at the end of the text.

As already said, the text has been handed down to us in a Latin translation probably made in the beginning of the 5th century in North Africa, presumably in Carthago. The *codex unicus* of this translation is a venerable document from the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century. It is one of the showpieces of the Biblioteca Capitolare of Verona (*codex LX*). The manuscript unites two originally independent manuscripts. Both were copied in Bobbio or in Verona, probably of an African archetype.[78] In the second collection,[79] devoted to the history of the Church in North Africa in general, and in Alexandria in particular, we read the *Historia acephala*.

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[74] Cf. P. Batiffol, "*Le Synodikon de S. Athanase*", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 10 (1901), 128–143. G. Schoo, *Die Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Sozomenos*, *Neue Studien zur Geschichte der Theologie und der Kirche* 11 (Berlin, 1911; repr. Aalen, 1973), 95–134 agreed with Batiffol's theory.

[75] Cf. H. Fromen, *Historia acephala*, 11–22; A. Martin, *Histoire "acéphale"*, 25–27; the notes in the edition of Sozomenus by J. Bidez, G. Sabbah, A.-J. Festugière, and B. Grillet, *Sozomène. Histoire ecclésiastique*, I–II, SCh 306 and 418 (Paris, 1983 and 1996).

[76] Cf. H. Fromen, *Historia acephala*, 59–61; A. Martin, *Histoire "acéphale"*, 25–27.

[77] For this and other reasons H. Fromen, *Historia acephala*, 11–22, and A. Martin, *Histoire "acéphale"*, 31–34 reject Batiffol's theory.

[78] The best description of this valuable codex was made by A. Martin, *Histoire "acéphale"*, 11–19. It should be noted, however, that in the introduction to this edition some confusion has arisen over the date and the place of origin of the *codex Veronensis* (7th century – 8th century – 7th–8th century; Bobbio – Bobbio or Verona).

[79] On the basis of the colophon with which the collection ends and in which a certain Theodosius calls himself the copier and the corrector, this part is usually called "the collection of the deacon Theodosius". Apart from that, we know nothing about this Theodosius.

Although it is easily seen that the text holds a special position in the manuscript, it can be interpreted correctly only if it is seen as part of the collection of documents in the Verona manuscript.[80]

This short Church history deals mainly with the Athanasius' conduct from the year 346 until the year 373,[81] but also with the history of Arianism in the 4th century. Because the years 328–345 of Athanasius' episcopacy are not discussed, the first editor of the text, Scipione Maffei, gave it the rather misleading title[82] of *Historia "acephala"*.

More exactly this *Historia* enters at length into the last three exiles of Athanasius and the attempts to replace him by heterodox bishops.[83] Furthermore, the text looks back at the whole period of Athanasius' episcopacy and lists Athanasius' successors. The *Historia acephala* is of great historical value, as it is almost the only source we have to reconstruct the last three exiles of Athanasius and as in other sources the different exiles are frequently mixed up.

The orthodoxy of the Alexandrian Church and of its leader Athanasius is constantly emphasized. It is for example remarkable that the *Historia* hushes up the Athanasius' condemnation and subsequent deposition by the orthodox council of Tyr in 335. According to the *Historia* Athanasius' deposition, flight and return were caused by imperial measures. Finally, the *Historia* fiercely claims Alexandria's superiority vis-à-vis Constantinople and Antioch.[84] Alexandria is considered as the place par excellence to safeguard the orthodoxy.

The three works dealt with here have more in common than would be suspected at first sight. All three are early Christian Church histories written at the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century. All three explicitly refer to Eusebius and have deeply influenced the further development and the characteristics of the genre. All three pose special problems as to textual tradition, interpretation and originality. Gelasius' work has come down to us only partially, and

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[80] In this context, read e.g. E. Schwartz, "*Zur Geschichte des Athanasius*", in: *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse* (1904), 357.

[81] That is why the text is sometimes called *Historia Athanasii*.

[82] Misleading because this way it is suggested that part of the text is lost. This theory was still fiercely defended by H. Fromen, *Historia acephala*, 6–7 but is convincingly refuted by A. Martin in the SCh edition, 21–23.

[83] For this, read 19–25 in the SCh edition.

[84] This last point is dilated upon by A. Martin, *Histoire "acéphale"*, 34–49.

some scholars think the same thing of the *Historia acephala*. Gelasius is involved in the controversy about Rufinus' books X and XI.

None of them stands comparison with the great Church histories of the 5th century—those of Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoretus. They confine themselves mainly to Church politics and they have as much in common with historiography as with hagiography. Their importance may neither be underestimated nor overestimated. It is mostly on the basis of these three works that Annick Martin was able to sketch masterfully in more than 900 pages[85] the history of the Egyptian Church during the 4th century. The key figure in this period was of course Athanasius. Thanks to him, the Egyptian Christianity became a well-structured community and a fervent defender of the Nicean creed.

Scientific desiderata are in the first place the *editio princeps* of Gelasius' *HE* and a new, revised critical edition of Rufinus' *HE*. Moreover, there is still more to be learned about Rufinus' translation techniques. A translation index, insofar as this will prove possible of course, and a confrontation of the text with the newest translation theories can possibly put a new perspective on Rufinus' *HE*. The question could be asked, for example, how well did Rufinus know Greek? Notwithstanding the large amount of recent studies about Socrates' methods, the sources of the different Church historians and the way in which they are interrelated still do not seem to have been studied sufficiently.[86]

Postscript

The three works which are entrusted to us, continue to receive substantial attention, and many problems remain to be resolved or even addressed. We limit our additions to three very recent articles which have made a unique contribution to and understanding of our subject. First of all there is the more general contribution of F. Winkelmann, "Zur nacheusebianischen christlichen Historiographie

[85] *Athanase d'Alexandrie et l'Église d'Égypte au IV^e siècle (328–373)*, *Collection de l'École française de Rome* 216 (Roma, 1996).

[86] We wish to thank dr. Bram Roosen, who translated this article into English.

des 4. Jahrhunderts", in C. Scholz – G. Makris (ed.), *Polypleuros Nous. Miscellanea für P. Schreiner . . .*, Byzantinisches Archiv 19 (München – Leipzig, 2000), 404–414. For the *Historia acephala* we refer to P. Van Nuffelen, "La tête de l'histoire acéphale'", *Klio* 84 (2002), 125–140; this innovating article tries to demonstrate that Sozomenus and also Theodoretus used the complete *Historia acephala*, and using similarities between different sources, attempts a reconstruction of that part of the *Historia acephala* which according to Van Nuffelen is lost. Of the same scholar we finally mention his very stimulating article "Gélase de Césarée, un compilateur du cinquième siècle", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 95 (2002), 621–639; we read here the hypothesis that the historical Gelasius of Caesarea never composed any Church history, and that the compiler of the Pseudo-Gelasian Church history and of the Greek Rufinus would be the same person.

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3. *Hist. aceph.*

Text

Histoire "acéphale" et Index syriaque des Lettres festales d'Athanase d'Alexandrie. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes par Annik Martin avec la collaboration pour l'édition et la traduction du texte syriaque de Micheline Albert, SCh 317 (Paris, 1985), 11–136 (introduction), 137–169 (text and French translation) and 171–213 (notes). An English translation can be found in: A. Robertson, *Select Writings and Letters of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria*, *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, N.S. 4 (Oxford/New York, 1892), 496–499.

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CHAPTER SIX

PAGAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE

Wolf Liebeschuetz

Eunapius and his Writings

Eunapius[1] was about twenty years—one generation—younger than Ammianus Marcellinus. Like Ammianus he was from the Greek-speaking part of the Empire, having been born at Sardis in 347, or more probably in 348,[2] to a leading family of the city. But unlike Ammianus he never as far as we know held imperial office either civil or military. So he lacked the connections with court and army which a career in the imperial service might have gained for him. He was a civic notable pure and simple. Judging by what remains of his writings, he was not particularly interested in either administration or warfare, those two staples of classical historiography. He was however highly educated in Greek rhetoric and philosophy and had a strong interest in medicine. His cousin Melite was married to the Neo-Platonist philosopher Chrysanthius, whom Eunapius revered as a teacher, and almost as a father. Chrysanthius was one in the succession of Neo-Platonist philosophers commemorated by Eunapius in his *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*. Eunapius therefore had close personal links with that rather exclusive group of pagan intellectuals.[3] Like them, Eunapius devoted his life to the preservation of the Hellenic tradition. In this respect one might compare him with Libanius, about whom we know so much more. It follows that Eunapius' two works—the *History* as well as the *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*—were written from a strongly pagan point of view. As a committed pagan Eunapius is much more one-sided and polemical

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[1] Eunapius and Olympiodorus are quoted from the edition of Blockley (*FCH*).

[2] R.J. Penella, *Greek Philosophers and Sophists in the Fourth Century*, Liverpool 1990, 2–3.

[3] G. Fowden, "Pagan holy man in Late Antique society", *JHS* 102 (1982), 33–59.

than Ammianus. It is all the more noteworthy that Eunapius had studied rhetoric at Athens with the famous Christian sophist Prohaeresius,[4] and that he continued to love and admire his teacher in spite of the latter's religion, which caused him to be excluded from teaching while Julian the Apostate was emperor. The anti-Christian rhetoric of Eunapius, like the anti-pagan and anti-sectarian rhetoric of Christian writers, should not blind us to the existence of great deal of tolerance and common ground in every-day life. Of his two works the *Lives* have come down to us intact. The *History* has survived only in fragments, and also in abbreviated form in the *Historia Novella* of Zosimus. But we have enough of it to be able to assess its general character.

Eunapius' *History* was composed in fourteen books. The long period from 270 to 355, the year Julian was raised to the rank of Caesar, was covered in a single book, essentially an introduction.[5] Eunapius' history has survived only in disconnected, and often brief fragments, the most important in the collection of excerpts of Constantine Porphyrogennitos, the great majority in the *Excerpta de Sententiis*,[6] a few others in *Excerpta de Legationibus*. The modern collections of fragments of Eunapius also include numerous brief quotations from the *Suda*, only some of which name Eunapius as their source. Paschoud has estimated the surviving fragments as perhaps 7% of the original text.[7] Luckily we can supplement the fragments with the *New History* of Zosimus. Photius who had read both Zosimus and Eunapius tells us that Zosimus largely copied Eunapius. Resemblances between fragments and Zosimus show that Photius' observation must be generally speaking correct. Zosimos has certainly greatly shortened the text of Eunapius. He reduced the original of Eunapius from fourteen books to five, that is by something like two thirds, but certainly not all parts by the same amount. So the account of Julian's Persian campaign was evidently shortened considerably less. Zosimus' selection

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[4] But see R. Goulet, "Prohaeresius le païen et quelques remarques sur la chronologie d'Eunape de Sardes", *Antiquité Tardive* 8 (2000), 209–22, which gives a plausible argument that Prohaeresius was only thought to be a Christian because of his uncooperative attitude to Julian.

[5] According to a note in the margin of the ms. of *Exc. de Sent.* 5 = Fr. 15. To judge by the 91 chapters used by Zosimus to cover this period, Eunapius' first book was exceptionally long.

[6] This reflects the moralizing—in a wide sense—and sententious character of Eunapius' history.

[7] F. Paschoud, *Cinq études sur Zosime* (Paris, 1975), 211.

may well have significantly changed the character of his source. Abbreviation on the part of Zosimus could be responsible for some of the glaring omissions in what we know of Eunapius' narrative. But we cannot assess the extent of the distortion due to Zosimus.[8] Moreover, as will be argued below, not every item in the Eunapius-based Zosimus derives, from Eunapius.[9] It does however seem to be the case, that by and large Zosimus kept the main structure of Eunapius' narrative. We can therefore achieve a plausible reconstruction not only of the texture of Eunapius' work (using the fragments), but also of the overall composition and principal themes of his narrative (from Zosimus).

When were the Treatises of Eunapius Written and Published?

To assess the place of Eunapius in the evolution of Late Antique historiography, and particularly the relation of his *History*[10] to the *History* of Ammianus, it is necessary to establish, at least roughly, when his writings were published or otherwise made known to the wider public.[11] Unfortunately neither of Eunapius' two books can be dated with certainty. The *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists* (abbreviated *V. soph.*), which has come down to us intact, must have appeared sometime after 395, since it mentions Alaric's invasion of Greece.[12] It also contains an allusion to an unspecified disturbance that had troubled Eunapius' native Lydia in the recent past, and which had flared up once more at the time of writing.[13] This looks

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[8] The fragments are too fragmentary and too few to give clear information about Zosimus' omissions.

[9] See my discussion of the anti-Christian digressions below (pp. 207–14), but apart from these I am convinced by the evidence assembled by Paschoud in his *Edition*, vol. III.2. 82–84, and his summary of recent work on the problem.

[10] On the original title of the work, see R. Blockley, *FCH*, I, 1–2.

[11] 'Publication' when applied to classical literature is ambiguous. An author might recite his work to a small and selected group of friends and students, or to a large audience. He might send copies to a few—or many—friends. Recipients might employ slaves to produce copies for further distribution or even for sale. On cost and publication of books see S. Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola*, Göttingen 2002, 443–64.

[12] *V. soph.* 7.3.1 (476); 8.3.4 (482).

[13] *V. soph.* 7.5 (479), cf. and Th.M. Banchich, "The date of Eunapius' *Vitae Sophistarum*," *GRBS* 25 (1984), 183–92. Eunapius Fr. 66.2 (Blockley) shows the disastrous character of these troubles. Another argument in favour of an early date

like a reference to the Tribigild/Gainas rising in 399. So the treatise was probably written, and presumably published, around 400.[14] It is not likely to be much later because Oribasius, the former doctor of the emperor, Julian was still alive at the time of writing.[15] Oribasius had been a pupil of Zeno of Cyprus, who was a contemporary of Julian the sophist, of whom we know that he was the predecessor of Prohaeresius at Athens.[16] In 363 or 364 Prohaeresius was 87. As Oribasius was still taught by Prohaeresius' predecessor, this must have been several decades earlier. So Oribasius cannot have been less than 80 in 400.[17]

As for the *History*, its dates remain controversial. We know that Eunapius' *History* started where the narrative of Dexippus ended,[18] that is in 270 with the death of the emperor Claudius Gothicus. We also know that Eunapius concluded his *History* in 404, with the death of the empress Eudoxia.[19] The *History* appeared in at least two instalments. It is certain that an early instalment had already become public when Eunapius was writing the *Lives*. For Eunapius directs readers of the *Lives* to look in the *History*[20] for a fuller account of

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for the *V. soph.* is that at the time of writing Oribasius was still alive (*V. soph.* 21.2 (499)). According to *PLRE* I.311 *sv* Eustathius 4, Oribasius had a son Eustathius who held an important position (*archiatrus*), perhaps at court, as early as 373 (Basil *ep.* 151 of A.D. 373 , see also *ep.* 189 of A.D. 374/75), who must surely must have been born before say 340. That would make his father around 80 in 395. But according to *V. soph.* 499 Oribasius married after his exile. If so, this Eustathius cannot have been his son—unless he was the son of a much earlier marriage. A later date for the *V. soph.* is proposed by Paschoud, *Cinq études sur Zosime*, 171.

[14] Otherwise F. Paschoud, op. cit., 171, who argues for a date around 412 or later. But writing at that date Eunapius could surely not have refrained from drawing a pagan moral from the sack of Rome by Alaric in 410. There is no hint of that.

[15] *V. soph.* 22.2 (499).

[16] Ibid. 19 (497).

[17] *PLRE* I. 731 *Prohaeresius; V. soph.* 10.1.2 (485). In A.D. 336–40, when Libanius was studying at Athens, Prohaeresius, Epiphanius, and Diophantus were the three leading sophists at Athens (*V. soph.* 16. (495)). So Julian had presumably retired by then. But if he was still taking pupils in retirement, he could have taught Oribasius around this time, but surely not much later. If Oribasius was a student of twenty in 336, he would have been 84 in 400.

[18] Millar, "P. Herennius Dexippus: The Greek world and the third century invasions", *JRS* 59 (1969), 12–29.

[19] Photius *Bibl.Cod.* 77, I 158–60 = Blockley *FCH*, II, 2–3.

[20] Events mentioned in *V. soph.* as already told in *Histories*: 1. Fr. 21.1 = *V. soph.* 7.3.8 (476), activities of Julian in Gaul have been related "in the books about Julian". 2. Fr. 21.2 = *V. soph.* 21.1.4 (498), that Oribasius had actually made Julian emperor is related "in the books about Julian". 3. Fr. 39.7 = *V. soph.* 7.6.5 (480), death of Valens at Adrianople described "in detailed writings". 4. Fr. 64.2 = *V. soph.* 7.3.4

certain episodes. But a full account of Alaric's invasion of Greece in 395 is something which Eunapius only hopes to write in the future—God being willing.[21] Eunapius' account of the Goths in Greece therefore comes from the later instalment, and was necessarily published after 404, though we cannot be certain how long after.

When did the first instalment appear? Of the 5 episodes mentioned as having been published earlier than the *Lives*,[22] two belong to the reign of Julian. The others are: the death of Valens, the earlier of a succession of unspecified disasters that struck Greece and her temples, and, lastly, certain misdeeds of monks. Some scholars have identified the last two with specific events in the reign of Theodosius. But the identifications are not necessary, and to my mind even unlikely.[23] Greece suffered under Theodosius as a result of the invasions of Alaric's Goths. But Eunapius tells us in the *Lives* that he hoped to deal with that topic sometime in the future.[24] So the 'unspeakable' Greek calamities already described in the first instalment[25] are something else: most likely devastation wrought by Gothic raiders immediately after the battle of Adrianople in 378. As for misdeeds and acts of tyranny of the monks which Eunapius had castigated in the published instalment of the *History* (item 5 in n. 20), these need not have included their participation in the destruction of the Serapeum in 391. That act of fanaticism was certainly far

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(476), unspeakable disasters which spread over Greece after appointment of an unqualified hierophant are described "in detailed writings of my History". 5. Fr. 56 = *V. soph.* 6.11.1–7 (472), the misdeeds and tyranny of monks (but not I think necessarily already the destruction of the Serapeum, A.D. 391), "have been narrated in the detailed writings of my History".

[21] Fr. 64.3 = *V. soph.* 8.1.10–2.3 (481), destruction of temples and Alaric's invasion of Greece (A.D. 395 & 396) will be told in "detailed" history. *V. soph.* 7.3 (476), "disasters of which some [τὰ μέν, i.e. the earthquake of A.D. 375?] have been told in the detailed writings of my *History*, others [τὰ δέ]—God willing—will be told". Though the construction is not quite clear, the context suggests that 'the others' concern Alaric's invasion of Greece.

[22] See n. 20 above. But *V. Phil.* X.2.3 (66) puzzlingly seems to refer to an account of Prohaeresius as still to be published. This would imply, as argued by Goulet in op. cit. n. 5, that the instalment of the *History* already published when Eunapius wrote this did not go beyond the reign of Julian. This contradicts what would seem to be the clear evidence of the passages cited in n. 20. However, a few lines earlier (X.1.1) Eunapius refers to an account of Prohaeresius in the *History* as having been published already.

[23] Following T.D. Barnes, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta* (Brussels, 1978), 114–117.

[24] *V. soph.* 7.3.4–5 (476); 8.2.3 (482).

[25] Episode 4 in n. 20 (*V. soph.*) 7.3.4, which read on its own is ambiguous; cf. Blockley, *FCH* I, 3–4.

from being the first occasion that monks offended pagan sensibilities.[26] So there is no compelling reason to conclude that the early instalment of the *History* must have included an account of the early years of the reign of Theodosius.

In fact general considerations make it most unlikely that any except the very beginning[27] of Eunapius' account of Theodosius was published while that emperor, or indeed his son Arcadius, was alive and ruling in the East, that is before A.D. 408.[28] As a rule people did not write the history of the reigning emperor. It simply was too dangerous. Panegyric was the appropriate genre.[29] Consequently writers of recent history usually ended their account at the death of the previous ruler. Eutropius[30] and Festus[31] did not take their surveys of Roman history beyond the accession of Valens, the reigning emperor at the time of writing. Ammianus ended his *History*, most tantalisingly for modern historians, at the death of Valens. He carefully refrained from describing any acts of the reigning Theodosius. Eunapius is likely to have shown the same restraint.

In fact there is a significant resemblance between Eunapius' treatment of the aftermath of the battle of Adrianople and the death of Valens, and the concluding chapters of Ammianus' *History*. For instead of ending his *History* with the death of Valens, Ammianus chose to finish it on an optimistic note with accounts of a successful defence of Adrianople, of the defeat of a Gothic attack on Constantinople, and as the very last item in his *History*, a description of the efficient execution of 'a prudent plan' of the *magister militum* Julius, with the

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[26] Fr. 56: "For at that time whoever wore a black coat, and wished to behave disgracefully in public, had the power of a tyrant, to such a height of virtue had mankind come. But concerning these things there is an account in the general narrative of my *History*". To my mind "these things" are more likely to relate to the license allowed monks generally, than specifically to their participation in the events at Alexandria in 391. Libanius *Or.* 30, which attacks the aggression of monks is dated 386 (P. Petit, *Byzantion* 21 (1951), 293ff.), and monkish aggression was surely not new even then.

[27] On this see below.

[28] Eunapius approved of his teacher Chrysanthius' moderation as pagan high priest of Lydia: *V. soph.* 7 (477–8), 23.2–3 (501–2).

[29] Which is probably the meaning of Amm.Marc. 31.16.9: *quos id (si libuerit) aggressuros, procudere linguas ad maiores moneo stilos*, cf. Eutropius *Brev.* 18 and R.C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus* (Brussels, 1975), 96 n. 143.

[30] Eutrop. 18.

[31] *The Breviarium of Festus*, ed. with historical commentary by J.W. Eadie (London, 1967), chs. 29–30.

result that a large number of young Goths billeted in cities and camps across the eastern provinces were massacred.[32] Eunapius' account of the Adrianople campaign similarly finishes on a note of success. An account of how the general Modares annihilated a large band of Goths, is followed by a description of the massacre of the young Goths.[33] Eunapius places these events immediately after the accession of Theodosius, though the massacre in fact preceded the accession.[34] The first references to the new emperor Theodosius are favourable,[35] and in this respect quite unlike the later chapters dealing with his reign. This is what one would expect if the account of the accession was written to be published while Theodosius was alive, and the rest only after his death. In short, the likeness between the part of Eunapius' *History* summarised in Zosimus 4.24.4–25.4 and chapters 31.15–16 of Ammianus suggest that when Eunapius wrote these chapters he intended them to conclude his *History* on an optimistic note, and with remarks welcoming the new emperor.[36] Considerably later, when Eunapius had taken his narrative up to 404, his history of events to the accession of Theodosius turned out to have been only the first instalment of Eunapius' work.[37]

That he originally intended to end his *History* in 379 fits what we know of Eunapius' biography. Eunapius tells us that he was encouraged to write the history of Julian by Julian's doctor and friend Oribasius, and that Oribasius had presented him with a detailed memorandum of the deeds of the emperor. As Paschoud has pointed out, Eunapius' detailed report of the Persian campaign could not have been written without such aid. But Eunapius is unlikely to have been entrusted with the memorandum immediately after Julian's death. In 363 Eunapius was at most 17, perhaps younger.[38] He was

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[32] Amm.Marc. 31.16.1–8 (A.D. 378).

[33] Zosim. 4.25–6.

[34] The massacre had in fact happened before the accession of Theodosius on 19 January 379 (Paschoud, *Ed.*, IV.26, n. 154, 388–91). On the episode see M.P. Speidel, "The slaughter of Gothic hostages after Adrianople", *Hermes* 126 (1998), 503–06.

[35] Zosim. 4.25.1

[36] T.D. Barnes, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta*, 114–23 reached similar, though not identical conclusions; not accepted by F. Paschoud, *Ed.*, III.2, 90–91.

[37] I would therefore place Zosim. 4.24.4–26.9 at the end of a book, and not like R. Blockley (*FCH* II, 69–70) near the beginning of one.

[38] Born 349 (Blockley *FHC*, I, 1); 345/6 (*PLRE* I, *Eunapius* 2); see discussion in R. Goulet "Sur la chronologie de la vie et des oeuvres d'Eunape de Sardes", *JHS* 100 (1980), 60–61.

a student at Athens. Subsequently Oribasius was in exile for some considerable time. We do not know how long, though Eunapius' account suggests that the emperors who had sent him into exile also recalled him.[39] So perhaps he returned before the death of Valentinian I in 375. By this time Eunapius was back at Sardis and making his name as a sophist. It is likely that it was Chrysanthius who drew Oribasius' attention to the promising young Hellene. This might have been in the late 370s. Since Eunapius' principal objective in writing the *History* was to commemorate Julian,[40] he will not, at the start of his work, have been very much interested in the history of Julian's successors. So he might well have thought that the death of Valens would make a good finishing point. Around 379 he might have had high hopes of Theodosius, who had returned the confiscated property of Oribasius.[41] Subsequently, presumably after the death of Theodosius, he decided to go on,[42] but by then the emperor's anti-pagan measures had turned approval to bitter hostility. If this conjecture is right, Zosimus 4.27 with its extremely hostile treatment of Theodosius would summarise the beginning of Eunapius' post-Theodosian narrative.

There remains the question when the second instalment of the *History* was given to the public. As we have seen the *History* ended in 404 with the death of the empress Eudoxia.[43] This is certain. We have the express statement of Photius who tells us that he had read the second edition of the *History*, and that he had compared it with two copies of the first. He noticed that both editions covered the same period of history, but differed in that the first edition contained blasphemous references to the Christian faith, of which the most offensive were omitted from the second edition. The expurgation was crudely carried out, sometimes even at the expense of the intelligibility of the text.[44] That Eunapius' *History* did indeed end in 404 is confirmed by the fact that after 404, or strictly after a lacuna beginning in 404, Olympiodorus replaces Eunapius as the principal source of Zosimus. So Eunapius must have written the last part of the *History*

[39] *V. Phil.* 21–22 (498–99).
[40] Fr. 1.90.
[41] *V. soph.* 21.2 (499).
[42] From Zosim. 4.27.
[43] See above, n. 11.
[44] Photius, *Bibl.Cod.* 77,1, 158–60 = Blockley *FCH* II.2–5.

after 404. Presumably he published the completed *History* after the death of Arcadius, that is sometime after 408. As I have argued in the case of the *Lives*, it is unlikely that Eunapius was still writing after the sack of Rome, for this would surely have been foreshadowed in his text.

Paschoud in his *Cinq études*, and again in his magisterial *Edition* of Zosimus, has proposed a totally different chronology.[45] Essentially, he rejects the explicit testimony of Photius that the two editions of the *History* covered the same ground, and instead he argues that the second edition involved alterations of a far-reaching kind which served the purpose of bringing Eunapius' anti-Christian argument up to date in the light of new perspective created by the sack of Rome in 410. This involved, firstly, the continuation of the work beyond the death of Theodosius I (which in Paschoud's view marked the end of the first edition), and secondly the insertion into the first edition of material taken from a Latin history written by one 'Ignotus' to drive home the religious lesson of the sack of Rome, namely that the abandonment of the ancestral gods was the principal cause of the disasters that had struck the Roman state. Faced with the objection that even the second edition ended in 404, and did not include the sack of Rome, Paschoud argues that Eunapius intended to take his *History* to the fall of Rome, but that the work was left unfinished, presumably because of the author's death. I am not persuaded by Paschoud's argument, though a full refutation would be too long for this chapter. Paschoud's theory is essentially an attempt to cope with two real difficulties. It is nevertheless, as I will try to show unnecessary. First there is the fact that even the early books of Eunapius' *History*—as summarised by Zosimus—include material, in the form of anti-Christian excursuses,[46] which must post-date the fall of Rome in 410. But if, as is argued later in this paper, these excursuses have been added by Zosimus,[47] they are irrelevant to the chronology of Eunapius. Secondly there is the problem of fragment 72: "During the time of the Empress Pulcheria, the provinces were up for sale

[45] *Ed.* III.2, 84–87 (1989) modifies the hypothesis expounded fully in *Cinq études* (1975).

[46] Already Mendelssohn in his edition of 1887 proposed that the digressions were Zosimus' own work, xxxviiff. and elsewhere, eg in the apparatus to p. 153, l.10. See also discussion below, 208–12.

[47] See below, 212–14.

to whoever wished to buy their governorships . . .” There follows an account of abuses resulting from the purchase office. If the naming of Pulcheria is original, the fragment is not part of the main narrative. For the condemnation of Hierax, the villain of the last chapters of the *History*, and the fining of Herennius, the man who had condemned him, not long after, happened in 404.[48] So an account of corruption under the Empress Pulcheria could only have been a digression, likening corruption in 404, under the Empress Eudoxia, to similar abuses at the time of writing, which could be blamed on to Pulcheria.

The passage, if it is what Eunapius actually wrote, amounts to an indication of the date of writing. But the indication is very uncertain. Pulcheria was proclaimed Augusta in A.D. 414 when she was fifteen years old, while her brother and fellow ruler Theodosius II was thirteen.[49] Although her influence had its ups and its downs, she remained a powerful lady up to her death in 453.[50] Which phase of Pulcheria’s public life did Eunapius allude to? The likeliest is the period 414–21 when Pulcheria, evidently an early developer, could have been for practical purposes grown up, while her brother was still an adolescent.

Even so one might wonder why Eunapius should have taken the quite unnecessary risk of transgressing the limits of his period in order to attack the powerful Augusta. For this and other reasons Blockley argued that ‘Eudoxia’, not ‘Pulcheria’ is what Eunapius originally wrote, and that ‘Pulcheria’ is a corruption.[51] It is certainly true that the reading ‘Eudoxia’ would make good sense. The passage would then describe the background of general corruption, of which the scandals of Arbazacius and Hierax were special cases. It does however remain difficult to see how the exchange of names could have come about. But even if the reading Pulcheria is original, this would only mean that the last part of the *History*, the second instalment, was written significantly later than one would otherwise suspect. It would not require the hypothesis of the transformation of

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[48] Alan Cameron, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius* (Berkeley, 1993), 239–46.

[49] K. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses* (Berkeley, 1983), 90–111.

[50] See Holum, *op. cit.*, chs. II–VII.

[51] As argued persuasively by R.C. Blockley, “Was the first book of Zosimus’ *New History* based on more than two sources?” *Byzantion* 50 (1980), 393–402.

the first edition by its fusion with a Latin history written after the sack of Rome a western 'Ignotus'.

Eunapius and Ammianus

Eunapius and Ammianus must have been working on their histories at more or less the same time. Both histories are to a considerable extent about events that had happened in their author's life-time.[52] Because Ammianus was about twenty years older than Eunapius, the detailed part of his history, that is the part concerned with events of his own life-time, probably started considerably earlier than the corresponding section of Eunapius' work. But the first 13 books of Ammianus have been lost, and by a curious coincidence the earliest book of Ammianus' History to survive, deals with events of the year 353/54, less than two years before the start of the full narrative of Eunapius. Subsequently the two narratives run in parallel until 378, the end of Ammianus' *History*. The question immediately arises whether one historian influenced the other, and if so who whom.

The two historians are certainly not totally independent of each other, as is shown most clearly by comparison of the two accounts of Julian's Persian campaign. Not only do both authors tell the same story, but they have selected the same events for more elaborate treatment, and have composed narratives on roughly the same scale. They even share the same vagueness about the strategic background of Julian's crucial decision not to besiege Ctesiphon, the turning point of the campaign.[53] In contrast the account of Libanius, while describing the same events, follows a different pattern, and surprisingly enough is more concerned to explain the decisions taken outside Ctesiphon.[54] But the explanation of the kinship of the accounts of Eunapius and Ammianus is not obvious. It is made more difficult by the fact that we only have a shortened version of Eunapius' text; though comparison of episodes found in both Zosimus and Ammianus

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[52] In the tradition of classical historiography researched history is contemporary history, see R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford, 1946), 25–28.

[53] Differing from J.F. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989), 158–59, I do not think that important material has been lost in the lacuna after Amm. Marc. 24.7.2. Ammianus' literary and rhetorical design leaves little scope for explicit strategic analysis.

[54] Lib. *Or.* 18.248–50, 260–63.

suggests that Zosimus has cut down Eunapius' narrative of the Persian campaign by much less than two-thirds. Presumably he compensated by cutting all the more drastically elsewhere.

Basically there are three possible explanations of the family likeness between the narratives of Eunapius and Ammianus. Both authors could have based their account on the same source. Ammianus could have derived the basic structure of his account from Eunapius, or alternatively Eunapius could have based his account on that of Ammianus. The first possibility is much the most likely. In spite of their overall similarity the two accounts show considerable discrepancies. Eunapius mentions names, (or different versions of the same name) and incidents which are not mentioned by Ammianus, and vice versa.[55] This makes it unlikely that either simply 'followed' the other. The likeness is most convincingly explained if the two versions represent independent developments of a common original. As we have seen that Julian's companion and doctor, Oribasius, had given Eunapius a detailed memorandum of the deeds of Julian.[56] It is a reasonable assumption that this is the basis of Eunapius' account. Ammianus had taken part in the campaign. He is likely to have kept a diary. He certainly was well informed. But that does not mean that he necessarily had a clear picture of the course of the campaign. When he came to write up his notes—we don't know how many years later—he might well have found an earlier account written by somebody at headquarters, in close contact with Julian himself, extremely helpful. So he too might easily have used Oribasius. A few descriptions are so similar that Matthews has considered direct borrowing likely, and he has suggested that this was from Eunapius to Ammianus.[57] But this is far from certain. The narratives of the Persian campaign do not offer proof of direct influence of either of our two historians on the other.[58]

Ammianus completed his history in 390 or 391.[59] By then, if my account of the chronology of Eunapius' *History* is right, a significant

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[55] Matthews, *op. cit.*, 164–66.
[56] Fr. 15.
[57] Matthews, *op. cit.*, 171–73.
[58] The various versions of an historical excursus on the provinces surrendered by Jovian (Zosim. 3.32; Amm.Marc. 25.99–11; Eutr. 10.17.2–3; Fest. 29) may derive from a common source: cf. Paschoud, *Cinq études*, 191–99; but that this is Nicomachus Flavianus is pure conjecture.
[59] Matthews, *op. cit.*, 27.

part of it had already been written, and 'published'. This means that if there was influence, it was from Eunapius to Ammianus, and not the other way round. But even if my chronology should be wrong, there is one consideration, independent of any theory about relative dates of publication, which makes it unlikely that Eunapius used Ammianus. Eunapius set out to write imperial history like Dexippus,[60] and he intended the coverage to be empire-wide.[61] But a survey of his work suggest that he did not have anything like enough information to write an empire-wide history.[62] This is not surprising since he spent his life in a provincial town, presumably had few sources of information from the West, and as far as we know had not travelled further than Athens. In contrast Ammianus was extraordinarily widely connected and informed. One imagines that if Eunapius had known the history of Ammianus he would have used it to fill a few of the numerous gaps in his information. He evidently did not do this, so it would seem that he did not know the *History* of Ammianus.

Ammianus on the other hand, since he only published around 391, might in some way or other have heard about the first instalment of Eunapius' *History*,[63] and so could have been influenced by what he had heard, or even read. There is indeed one important respect in which Eunapius might conceivably have influenced Ammianus. When Eunapius and Ammianus began to write, the genre which R. Blockley calls 'classicising history', had long been dormant.[64] By this term he means the writing of a detailed narrative,[65] of large scale events, in a highly literary language, in the tradition of say, Tacitus in Latin or Dio Cassius in Greek. Tacitus and Dio were imperial historians, but classicising history did not need to have the whole Empire as its subject matter. It could be regional, and perhaps most commonly concerned itself with a single war. When Eunapius decided to write his history, nobody had written imperial history on a large scale for a considerable time. Some kind of historical record

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[60] F. Millar, "P. Herennius Dexippus: The Greek world and the third century invasions", *JRS* 59 (1969), 12–29.

[61] *V. soph.* 6.11.7 (472) cite Greek "ἐν *τοῖς καθολικοῖς τῆς ἱστορίας συγγράμμασιν*".

[62] See below, 199–200.

[63] Oribasius would be the obvious link.

[64] A.D. Momigliano, "Pagan and Christian historiography in the fourth century A.D.", in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity*, ed. A.D. Momigliano (Oxford, 1963), 77–99.

[65] As opposed to epitomes like those of Livy, or the short overviews of Eutropius, Festus & Aurelius Victor.

of events was kept. Similarities between various historical texts of the fourth century and later, which are too close to be coincidental, come near to proving the existence, in both the Greek and the Latin speaking halves of the Empire, of basic narratives of the succession of emperors and usurpers.[66] But the subject matter of these lost texts would seem to have been closer to annotated consular lists[67] than to history in the classical sense. That is why Eunapius' intellectual friends asked him to write an account of public events that had happened since Dexippus' work, and had not been recorded in a published history.[68]

That was one reason why Eunapius set to work. Another and more basic motive was that he and his circle wished to commemorate Julian the Apostate, whose brief reign they considered the culmination of the events which the history would relate.[69] Their aim was strongly religious: to demonstrate that the one ruler recently who had adhered to the traditional religion had also been outstandingly the best emperor in the period covered.

So Eunapius can perhaps claim the credit for having revived the genre of classical history, and for having done so in order to propagate a religious message. Ammianus, like Eunapius, was a pagan, and like Eunapius he wrote from a pagan point of view, though his outlook is traditionalist and conservative rather than narrowly religious. I would suggest that Eunapius gave Ammianus the idea of writing an imperial history with a pagan bias, or perhaps with the wider purpose of upholding ancestral values, *mos maiorum*, of which

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[66] In spite of a lot of scholarly work there is still much uncertainty. See T. Barnes "The lost 'Kaisergeschichte'," 41; *idem*, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta*, 90–94. The so-called 'Kaisergeschichte', according to Barnes ended in 337. On a later Latin record see J. Schlumberger, *Die Epitome de Caesaribus, Untersuchungen zur heidnischen Geschichtsschreibung des 4. Jahrhunderts nach Chr*, Vestigia 18 (Munich, 1974); on a Greek historical record see B. Bleckmann, "Die Chronik des Johannes Zonaras und eine pagane Quelle zur Geschichte Konstantins", *Historia* 40 (1991), 343–65; *idem*, *Die Reichskrise des 3. Jahrhunderts in der spätrömischen und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung*, Untersuchungen zu den nachdionischen Quellen der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras (Munich, 1992); *idem*, "Bemerkungen zu den Annalen des Nicomachus Flavianus", *Historia* 44 (1995), 83–99.

[67] R.W. Burgess, *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana* (Oxford, 1993), esp. 175–86; B. Croke, "City Chronicles of Late Antiquity", in *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, eds. G. Clarke, B. Croke, R. Mortley and A. Emmett Nobbs (Sydney, 1990, repr. 1992), 165–203.

[68] Fr. 1.90–5.

[69] Fr. 1.95–6.

traditional cults were an essential part.[70] But if Ammianus adopted the basic idea from Eunapius, he also decided to improve on the Eunapian model by making his history more comprehensive, more detailed, and accurate, and less one-sidedly partisan.

Form and Content of Eunapius' History

Eunapius obviously intended that his *History* should be a work of literature. He uses a vocabulary drawn from classical authors. His style is difficult. His periods are elaborate,[71] and he has composed set speeches for his principal characters.[72] There are numerous allusions to classical authors.[73] A feature of Eunapius' style that recalls Ammianus is his use of striking similes. Eunapius certainly wrote to entertain, and when he is without a good source, as in the section known to us only through the second half of Zosimus Book 4, his narrative is liable to dissolve into anecdote, and gossip.

Eunapius was not ambitious to shine as a composer of dramatic battle scenes. He did not describe Julian's famous victory at Strasburg. The fact that Julian himself had already described the battle of Strasburg was reason enough for Eunapius not to describe that famous victory.[74] Eunapius mentions, as he was bound to do, the Roman defeat at Adrianople in 378, but he does not appear to have produced a full rhetorical description of it, as Ammianus did. If Zosimus's summary has preserved the character of Eunapius' writing, Eunapius was not interested in military strategy. His account of Julian's Persian campaign makes no attempt to explain the reasons for its failure;[75]

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[70] Ammianus must have kept a diary from early time, and presumably always hoped to make it the basis of some literary work, but not necessarily a general history of the Empire. Campaign history or panegyric were the genres in which contemporary events were commemorated at that time, if they were commemorated at all.

[71] Blockley, *FCH* I, 10–15; cf. G. Giangrande, "Caratteri stilistici delle 'Vitae Sophistarum' di Eunapio", *Bolletino del comitato per la preparazione dell' edizione nazionale dei classici greci e latini* 4 (1956), 59–70.

[72] Eunap. Fr. 18.6.

[73] Homer: Frs. 23.2; 27.3; 39; 72.1; Zosim. 5.6. Hesiod: Fr. 72.1; Thucydides: Fr. 1. Plato Fr. 5, 30. Menander: Fr. 77. Herodotus: Zosim. 4.20; Aristotle: Fr. 37.

[74] Fr. 17, see also Zosim. 3.8, where the author states that he omitted to write an account of the defence of Nisibis, because Julian had already described it.

[75] Fr. 27.6 seems to mark the turning point.

but of course the much fuller narrative of Ammianus also lacks a strategic analysis of the campaign.

Eunapius castigates 'corruption', but shows little interest in other aspects of imperial administration. Needless to say Eunapius was 'against' the barbarians, but he gives no indication of having thought about strategies to cope with them. When Eunapius describes measures adopted by, Constantine or Theodosius, he does not evaluate them in the light of the options available at the time, but manipulates them as raw material for invective. Eunapius gave little space to the negotiations between the emperor and barbarians. This is presumably the reason why relatively few extracts from Eunapius have been taken into the *Excerpta de Legationibus*. Characteristically he appears to have omitted the terms of the treaty between the Empire and the Goths in 382, indeed he may not have even mentioned the fact that there was a treaty.[76] So even today historians trying to evaluate, what was on any reasoning one of the decisive episodes of the fourth century, can still only deal in conjectures.

Eunapius tells us that the most important benefit of history is ". . . through knowledge of past events to gain the experience of old age while still young, so that we know what is to be avoided and what sought after".[77] But he evidently thought of the lessons of history principally in terms of the moral behaviour of individuals; that is to show what was good, and what bad behaviour in men occupying public positions from the emperor downwards. The lessons are taught by good and bad examples. Among the portraits set out for emulation the outstanding one is that of the emperor Julian. Eunapius tells us how much he loved and admired Julian, and the account of the reign of Julian was both the climax and the most detailed section of the *History*, the years 55–64 being covered in four books.

Julian impressed his men with the importance of justice. Force, he insisted, was only effective at its point of application, while justice, provided it was applied with authority, also worked at a distance.[78] Julian is praised for his fairness as a judge, and for not allowing justice to be delayed. His praetorian prefect Salutius is given

[76] The contrast with the abundance of diplomatic detail in Zosimus' summaries of Olympiodorus could not be sharper.
[77] Fr. 1.52–6.
[78] Fr. 18.1.

praise for outstanding clemency.[79] Julian is generous to defeated barbarians.[80] The lessons of history are frequently summarised in short, pithy sayings: "It is best for generals to plan every action in secret",[81] or "man is more vulnerable and fallible in a position of honour than of misfortune".[82]

Highly unfavourable accounts of Julian's successors have the effect of accentuating the unique qualities of Julian. In the case of Jovian he describes his contemptuous reception by the people of Antioch.[83] Valens' treason trials are presented as examples of what to avoid. After relating Valens' revenge on the followers of the usurper Procopius, Eunapius remarks that it is characteristic of God to spare even the guilty, while it is human nature to condemn even the innocent.[84] The Theodore trial, and the subsequent ruthless witch-hunt, figured very prominently in Eunapius' history of Valens. There was a full but confused account of the entry of the Goths into the Empire in 376. Valens' disastrous strategy of rushing into pitched battle is contrasted with the strategy of wearing out the enemy through harassment advocated by the general Sebastianus.[85] Most hostile of all is the portrait of Theodosius who is consistently denigrated. He is said to be covetous, harsh to the tax-payer, extravagant with public money,[86] deceitful towards the usurper Magnus Maximus,[87] irresponsible in his large scale enrolment of barbarians into the Roman army,[88] erotically susceptible and vulnerable to manipulation by Galla the daughter of Valentinian I, who became his second wife,[89] and taken advantage of by barbarians who pretended to be Christians.[90] Theodosius military setbacks are emphasised, his successes are denigrated, or credited to generals. He is said to have corrupted the people of Constantinople with theatricals just as Nero had once

[79] Fr. 25.5.
[80] Fr. 18.6.
[81] Fr. 23.4.
[82] Fr. 57.
[83] Fr. 29.
[84] Fr. 34.
[85] Zosim. 4.23–4.
[86] Zosim. 4.27–8.
[87] Zosim. 4.37.
[88] Zosim. 4.30–31.
[89] Zosim. 4.44.
[90] Zosim. 4.33.

corrupted the people of Rome.[91] His praetorian prefect and confidant Rufinus is accused of treasonable collusion with barbarian enemies.[92]

Eunapius' denigration of the emperors other than Julian is anti-Christian rhetoric. This was already the opinion of Photius (ca. A.D. 810–893), who had the advantage of having read the *History* of Eunapius intact: "Eunapius slandered the emperors who adorned their reign with Christian piety, disparaging them continually . . . especially Constantine the Great". Photius saw two editions of the history. He states that they covered the same ground. They differed in that the first edition included numerous attacks, not only on the Christian emperors, but on the Christian religion itself. For the second edition Eunapius had removed "the excessive and arrogant insolence directed at Christian piety". He carried out this expurgation rather crudely, even at the expense of intelligibility.[93] Zosimus and the fragments may well be derived from the expurgated edition. For while they include some passages praising paganism and vilifying Christian belief and practice, there are not very many of such passages. The disparagement of the Christian emperors however is consistent and pervasive. Eunapius sought to refute Christianity by its moral effect, that is above all by exposing the bad characters of Christian rulers.

Eunapius was no doubt perfectly aware that his portraits of the Christian emperors were distorted, just as in the 6th century Procopius was surely aware that the full truth about Justinian was not to be found either in the panegyric of the *Buildings* or in the invective of the *Secret History*.[94] But Eunapius consistently assigned to individuals the stereotypes appropriate to the role they played in the moral tale that was his *History*. The villains are given standard vices, extravagant spending of tax-payer's money, cruelty in raising money, self indulgence, corruption, favouritism.[95] Many features of Eunapius' portraits of the emperors Theodosius and Constantine recur in the characterisation of Rufinus the praetorian prefect and of Eutropius the powerful eunuch. The stereotyping of characters is not unique to Eunapius, but rather a feature of the rhetorical tradition. It is

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[91] Zosim. 4.33; Eunap. Fr. 48.1.
[92] Zosim. 4.51; 5.5.
[93] Photius, *Bibl.Cod.* 77.1, 158–60 = Blockley, *FCH* II, 2–5.
[94] Averil Cameron, *Procopius* (London, 1985), 49–66.
[95] So the initial characterization of Theodosius (4.27–9) is made up almost entirely of invective.

one of the many merits of Ammianus that he more often than not avoids it.

We should nevertheless not assume that Eunapius was being insincere when he proclaims the principle that "we must hand down contemporary events to posterity with due regard for the truth".[96] Presumably he felt that in using standard rhetorical technique to defend Hellenic religion he was upholding a more important truth than by accurate recording of mere facts. He did not see his duty to truth in the same light as a modern academic historian. For instance he distinguishes the proper recording of contemporary events, which must be reported as they had actually happened, and that of events involving persons of earlier generations. For written and oral traditions concerning the latter should be kept in the historical record, even if they have turned out to be wrong.[97] So when Eunapius obtained eye witness evidence about the Huns which contradicted information he had found in his sources and reported in his *History*, he included the new and correct version, but he did not erase the discredited one.[98] It was not a historian's duty to demolish accepted traditions.

The patterning of the narrative to demonstrate that impiety, above all the abandonment of the ancestral religion, was inevitably punished by military and other disasters is prominent in Zosimus, and some instances of this surely go back to Eunapius.[99] But the most striking examples are found in a number specially designed polemical digressions, which I will argue do not go back to Eunapius' *History*, but were inserted by Zosimus.[100] Apart from these excursuses I cannot spot an overall design to show that the adoption of Christianity would inevitably bring about the collapse of the Empire, and certainly no foreshadowing of the sack of Rome of 410.[101] This could

[96] Fr. 30, is from the preface to the Book beginning with the accession of Valentinian, Book 6 according to Blockley *HFC* II, 48–9; see also *V. soph., praef.* I.6 (453).

[97] Fr. 30.

[98] Fr. 41.

[99] Most strikingly presumably in the ending of the *History*.

[100] See below, 212–14.

[101] Zosim. 4.59.2 "while they (the senators of Rome) kept up the traditional rites they had inhabited the city unsacked for almost 1200 years", surely is an anticipation of the sack of 410 following the abandonment of the cult, but it stands in an excursus. But note that even there, the sack of Rome is not explicitly included among the subsequent disasters which the author intends to describe.

be because so much of the text has been lost in Zosimus' shortening, or alternatively because the fragments as well as Zosimus are derived from the expurgated second edition.[102] But it is perhaps more likely that this theme was simply not emphasised by Eunapius. In the *Lives of the Philosophers* this theme is not very prominent either, even though a melancholy sense of passing of the old religion, an atmosphere of 'twilight of the gods', pervades the later lives. The problem from the point of view of a pagan polemicist writing before 410 was that the gods had signally omitted to protect their worshipper Julian, nor had they prevented Theodosius from defeating the usurper Eugenius, in spite of his having permitted the revival of pagan cults at Rome. In the 390s the argument from worldly success favoured the Christians, and was principally used by them. It was only after the sack of Rome that the Christians were put on the defensive.

Eunapius deliberately rejected the year by year account of the Annalistic convention which was followed by Roman historians, most notably by Livy and Tacitus, and by Greeks writing imperial history, among them Cassius Dio and Dexippus, the Athenian, whose history Eunapius was continuing, as it was by Ammianus, and also by Olympiodorus, who was in a sense the continuator of Eunapius. Annalistic form was of course an ancient republican inheritance, which was not ideally suited to imperial history, as already Tacitus experienced.[103] The reigns of emperors provided a more natural division. Defending his procedure, Eunapius insists that precise dating, by year, season and day, is right for managers, accountants and astronomers, but not for historians. Detailed chronology is often inaccurate. It clutters up the narrative, and makes it more difficult for the reader to take in the important issues, above all it is irrelevant to the moral lessons, what conduct to chose and what to avoid, which it is the function of history to provide.[104]

Granted his sense of priorities, one can see Eunapius' point. It is moreover not true that Eunapius totally ignored chronology. "My reader will learn that a certain action was performed during the reign of a certain emperor, but I leave it to others to dance off into delusions of dating by year and day."[105] Nevertheless his avoidance

[102] According to Blockley *FCH* I,3, the extracts from *De Sententiis*, and probably therefore also those from *De Legationibus*, are from the second and expurgated edition.
[103] Cf. R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), 390–91.
[104] Fr. 1.50–90.
[105] Fr. 1.88–90.

of detailed chronology sometimes got Eunapius into serious difficulties. Eunapius' attitude to chronology matter least when he is writing a continuous narrative based on a single source, or perhaps easily correlated eye-witness reports. But when he has to correlate events happening in different parts of the Empire, for instance events involving Valens in the East with those of Valentinian in the West, or even adjacent but independent operations like those of the Gothic war 378–82, the effect is confusing at best, and at worst complete chaos. Events are set in the wrong chronological context. The same event may be narrated twice. The nadir was reached in whatever narrative of Eunapius is behind Zosimus 4.34, where the movements of the Goths in the years 379–82 are reduced to complete nonsense.[106]

It is likely that in 4.34, and elsewhere too, Zosimus has contributed to the confusion. The absence of chronological markers in Eunapius' text must have made summarizing extremely difficult, even if the summarizer was willing to make researches of his own—as Zosimus was evidently not—to get the chronology right.[107] But even so, it is obvious that the construction of a chronologically correct narrative, that would place events in the right year, and the right order, did not have anything like as high a priority for Eunapius as it had for the classical historians, or indeed for Ammianus. What really mattered was the unambiguous rhetorical presentation of the moral, and especially the religious message.

Eunapius' *History* was presumably intended to be a history of the Empire as a whole. But his coverage is very patchy. This is partly a result of his writing for the East where there was little interest in what was happening in the Latin West. But his coverage was also dictated by the information available to him, and this, as the patchiness of his narrative shows, was totally inadequate. For the early history he evidently had a relatively full account of Aurelian's war

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[106] Zosimus 4.38 sets in 386 a defeat of the Greuthungi, already recorded previously in 4.35 where it is set (incorrectly) in 382/3. On this, see Paschoud, *Ed.*, II.2, 410–11, n. 169. Frg. 42.85, describing the defence of Constantinople by Saracen federates, situates in 377, events following the battle of Adrianople in 378. Zosimus 4.34 is a very confused combination of events of 380/81 (sorted out by Paschoud, *op. cit.*, 406–8, n. 166). Zosimus 5.5 combines Alaric's invasions of Greece of 395 and 396–7 (cf. Paschoud, *Ed.*, III.1, 86–9, n. 6). To realize the full extent of chronological error in Eunapius it is necessary to read the notes of Paschoud's edition of Zosimus.

[107] See below.

against Palmyra.[108] He also had a fairly detailed account of the civil wars fought by Constantine and Licinius.[109] When we come to events of the fourth century the affairs in the Balkans, Italy and the western provinces receive proportionally much less space in Eunapius' *History* than they do in that of Ammianus, though Eunapius did write a lengthy account of the Magnentius usurpation and its suppression by Constantius A.D. 350–51.[110] As far as events in the East are concerned, neither Zosimus nor the fragments provide evidence that Eunapius wrote an account of Constantius' Persian wars, at least on anything like the scale of Ammianus' narrative.

For the history of his own time he depended to a considerable extent on oral information,[111] but he was not like Ammianus a member of an empire wide fraternity of imperial officials and ex-officials. His links with Greek pagan intellectuals cannot have been of much help when it came to obtaining information about event in frontier

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[108] See B. Bleckmann, *Die Reichskrise des 3. Jahrhunderts in der spätrömischen und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung*, Untersuchungen zu den nachdionischen Quellen der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras (Munich, 1992).

[109] Perhaps from Praxagoras' two books on Constantine from 306 to the foundation of Constantinople, *Suda* (ed. Adler) S.877: cf. F. Millar, "P. Herennius Dexippus: The Greek world and the third century invasions", *JRS* 59 (1969), 15; R.C. Blockley, "Was the first book of Eunapius' History based on more than two sources?", *Byzantion* 50 (1980), 393–402; B. Bleckmann, "Die Chronik des Johannes Zonaras und eine pagane Quelle zur Geschichte Konstantins", *Historia* 40 (1991), 343–65.

[110] Zosim. 2.42–54. There evidently were some quite detailed reports of this episode. A poem commemorating Constantius' campaign against Magnentius might have been one (cf. Paschoud, *Ed.*, t.I., xlii). But whatever Eunapius' sources, they were confusing, and confused him; see Paschoud, *Ed.*, I., 253–62, nn. 59–69. The lost common source of Aurelius Victor and Eutropius as well as of Jerome, Festus and the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, the so-called *Kaisergeschichte*, probably ended in 337; so T.D. Barnes, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta*, 91–94. Nicomachus Flavianus' *Annales*, about whose subject matter we know nothing at all, were dedicated to the emperor Theodosius, and so appeared too late to have helped Eunapius when he was writing the the first instalment of his *History*, even if they dealt with fourth century history. On the debate over the contents of these *Annales* see J. Schlumberger, "Die verlorenen Annalen des Nicomachus Flavianus: ein Werk über Geschichte der römischen Republik oder Kaiserzeit?," *HBHAC* 1982/83 (Bonn, 1985), 305–29.

Bleckmann, B., "Bemerkungen zu den Annalen des Nicomachus Flavianus", *Historia* 44 (1995), 83–99. The argument that they treated 4th century history is far from conclusive. But the existence of a narrative history, whether or not it was used by Flavianus, which would have been available to Eunapius, is plausibly argued by B. Bleckmann, "Die Chronik des Johannes Zonaras und eine pagane Quelle zur Geschichte Konstantins", *Historia* 40 (1991), 343–65.

[111] Fr. 66.2 describes questioning of different kinds of eye witnesses, cf. *Lives of Sophists*, 455.

provinces. The exception is the reign of Julian. Through Oribasius, one of this intellectual circle, and of course through Julian's own writings and presumably those of Libanius, Eunapius was very well informed about the reign of the Apostate. The pagan intellectuals and their sufferings under Valens evidently figured quite prominently in the *History*.[112] But the account of the events following the Goths' admission into the Empire in 376 is remarkably confused. From time to time he obtained good information. For instance when relating how the Goths were admitted into the empire in 376, Eunapius mentions that their crossing of the Danube was preceded by the taking of a large number of boys as hostages.[113] He also mentions an abortive attempt to disarm the barbarians before they were admitted.[114] Ammianus has neither of these important facts. Quite frequently Zosimus/Eunapius provides information, which combined with evidence from other sources, can be built into a coherent reconstruction of events, even though it seems unlikely that Eunapius had a clear picture himself.[115]

Eunapius has practically nothing about the western provinces under Gratian or Valentinian II. He does not even seem to have mentioned the controversy over the altar of Victory and the disestablishment of the state cults of Rome.[116] He was moderately well informed about the usurpations of Maximus and Eugenius,[117] and the campaigns of Theodosius against them[118] The general Promotus

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[112] Frs. 39.1–9, Zosim. 4.13–14.

[113] Zosim. 4.26, surely a flashback to 376 set in context of 379, though as transmitted by Zosimus it looks like another duplication. I would suggest that Eunapius derived it from a source different from that on which the account of the reception of the Goths in 4.20 is based. Ammianus who has not mentioned the taking of the hostages, mentions their killing 31.16.8. Paschoud, *Ed.*, II.2, 388–91, n. 154, is perhaps too critical.

[114] 4.20. Valentinian's recruiting campaign of Zosim. 4.12.1 is confirmed by laws in *CT* 7.13.

[115] The notes of Paschoud's *Zosime* emphasize Eunapius' failings, but they also show that he has a lot of good information, even in the midst of confusion. See also P. Heather, *Goths and Romans* (Oxford, 1991), 147–8 on the Gothic war 378–82.

[116] In Zosimus two excursuses, Gratian's rejection of the title of *pontifex maximus* (4.36), and an address to the senate by Theodosius in 394 (4.59), deal with the disestablishment of the pagan state cult. I argue on p. 212 below that both were inserted by Zosimus.

[117] Zosim. 4.35 cf. Paschoud, *Ed.*, II.2, 442–45, n. 172. Zosim. 4.53–54; Paschoud, *Ed.*, II.2, 453–58, nn. 201–203.

[118] But see Paschoud's criticism of Eunapius' versions of Theodosius' alleged visit to Rome after the battle of the Frigidus, and of the battle itself: *Ed.* vol. II.2, 467–89.

is mentioned repeatedly.[119] Perhaps Eunapius used a panegyric commemorating the feats of that general. Panegyrics must have been an essential source for anybody writing a history of that period. But in this case, the anecdotal character of the material makes personal contact with Promotus more likely. The general could well be the source of scandal about his enemy the praetorian prefect Rufinus. One would expect Eunapius to have been well informed about Greece. So it is extraordinary that he has merged Alaric's two invasions of Greece of A.D. 395 and 396 into a single story leading up to the assassination of the villain Rufinus, which in fact had taken place before the second invasion.[120] It is also remarkable that apart from Eunapius, as represented by Zosimus, neither literary nor archaeological evidence supports the view that Athens escaped capture and devastation.[121] Naturally enough Eunapius provides a full account of the Tribigild rising and the related Gainas affair of 399–400 which took place in western Asia Minor, his home territory.[122] In fact the post-Theodosian part of the *History* appears to have narrowed to a detailed account of affairs in western Asia Minor and Isauria. Eunapius wrote a very full account of the Tribigild rising and the related Gainas affair in 399–400,[123] and then went on to an account of fighting, misgovernment and corruption in Isauria.[124] Mixed up with this was an account of the intrigue that brought down the man who had defeated Gainas, one of Eunapius' heroes, the pagan Goth, Fravitta.[125] The last part of Eunapius *History* has been badly summarised by Zosimus whose text may in any case be interrupted by a considerable lacuna, and the fragments are too few to allow reconstruction. But at this stage Eunapius seems to have limited himself to regional history.

Photius tells us that both editions of Eunapius' *History* ended with the death of the empress Eudoxia and the consecration of Arsacius

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[119] Zosim. 4.35, 38–9, 45, 49–51; 5.3.

[120] Zosim. 5.5–7. As Alan Cameron saw, John of Antioch Fr. 190, included as Eunapius Fr. 64.1 in Blockley *FCH*, shows that this distortion is not due to Zosimus' summarising, but represents Eunapius.

[121] Claudian, *In Rufinum* 2.191; Jerome, *Ep.* 60.16; Philostorg. 12.1, 140.1–141.2 (Bidez-Winkelmann). P. Castren, *Post-Herulian Athens*, Helsinki 1994, 9. For a possible explanation see p. 210 below.

[122] Zosim. 5.13–23.

[123] Zosim. 5.13–23, Frs. 67–9.

[124] Zosim. 5.25, Frs. 68.2, 71.1–4, 72.

[125] Frs. 69.1–4, 71.3, 72.4.

as bishop of Constantinople in succession to the exiled John Chrysostom. The fact that Zosimus does not take the story of the East beyond 404, and that, with one possible exception,[126] the fragments do not go beyond 404, confirms the statement of Photius. There is no need to think that Eunapius must have intended to take his history further. John Chrysostom and the empress Eudoxia ended up as enemies, but Eunapius disapproved of both of them. The exile of Chrysostom and the death of the empress,[127] not to mention the burning of St. Sophia cathedral and the senate house, and the resumption of Isaurian raids, were indeed widely seen as divine punishment, and therefore could be presented as a dramatic endorsement of the anti-Christian tendency of the whole *History*.[128] It was an appropriate and indeed a strong ending.

To argue that Eunapius must have intended to take his *History* up to 410 and the sack of Rome is to take too little account of the Hellenic outlook of Eunapius and men like him.[129] The devastation of Asia by German federates and Isaurian raiders, the plundering of Greece by Alaric's Goths, and the burning of the senate house at Constantinople and the death of the empress, were felt more strongly in the East than the sack of Rome. The disasters close at hand were a sufficiently powerful demonstration of the fatal consequences of abandoning the ancestral cults.

Olympiodorus

Eunapius' history ends in 404. The history of Olympiodorus the next in the succession of historians,[130] began in 407 and ended in

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[126] Fr. 72.1–2 (corruption under Pulcheria).

[127] The death of Eudoxia is not mentioned in Zosimus. The usual explanation is that there is a hiatus in the text. This is surely right. It is unlikely that Photius defined the endpoint of the *History* with an event that had not actually been mentioned by Eunapius, as argued by Paschoud in n. 53 on 5.26 (*Ed.* vol. III.1, 191–6).

[128] Christians too saw these events as a divine judgement—a punishment for the persecution of John Chrysostom, Socr. *HE.* 6.19; Soz. *HE.* 8.25, 27.

[129] The comparison is with cultured provincial Greeks like Libanius and Synesius, who took very little interest in the West at all. The ecclesiastical historians Socrates and Theodoret give much more space to ecclesiastical affairs at Constantinople, including the fall of John Chrysostom than to events in the West. Sozomen summarizes and comments on Olympiodorus' account of the wars in the West, but the centre of his attention too is in the East.

[130] J.F. Matthews, "Olympiodorus of Thebes", *JRS* 60 (1970), 79–97.

425,[131] but it included a flashback of the career of Stilicho.[132] The history proper began with the breaking of the Rhine frontier by the Vandals in the last day of 406, and the fall of Stilicho and Alaric's invasion of Italy in 408. It ended with the crushing of the western usurper John by the armies of the eastern emperor Theodosius II, and the placing on the Western throne of Valentinian III, grandson of Theodosius I. The history was very detailed, seventeen years being covered in twenty two books. It has only come down to us in fragments. Photius wrote a summary of the whole. There can really be no doubt that Zosimus 5.26–6.13 represents a shortened version of Olymiodorus' narrative up to 410, though Zosimus breaks off before the sack of Rome. The history of Olympodorus was also used on as their principal source for secular events of the first quarter of the 5th century by the ecclesiastical historians Philostorgius and Sozomen; both preserve information derived from Olympiodorus which has been omitted by Zosimus. From all these texts we can have a reasonably good idea of the contents and character of Olympodorus' history. But the absence of verbatim quotations makes it impossible to reconstruct the style and general texture of his narrative.

Olympiodorus claimed that he had written not a history but only the material for history. According to Photios, who had read the work intact, Olympiodorus's style was clear, but loosely composed, and his language popular and trite.[133] Olympiodorus' style was evidently quite different from the elevated style of Ammianus and Eunapius. Eunapius had followed the current convention of Greek literary style, and kept his narrative very general. As far as possible he omitted proper names, whether of individuals or of topographical features, avoided the use of official Latin titles, and made few quantitative statements concerning such matters as the distance between places, or the population of a city, or the size of an army. Not so Olympiodorus. His *History* was conspicuous for the quantity and precision of detail in precisely those fields where Eunapius' *History* was lacking. He used Latin titles of officials rather than Greek circumlocutions.[134] He provides numerical estimates of the wealth of

[131] Blockley, *FCH*, 152–3 = Photius, *Bibl.Cod.* 80, 166.
[132] Olympiodorus, Fr. 1.
[133] Blockley, *FCH*, II, 152–3.
[134] See F. Paschoud, "Zosime, Eunape et Olympiodore, témoins des invasions barbares", in E. Chrysos and A. Schwarcz (eds.), *Das Reich und die Barbaren*, Ver-

senatorial families.[135] He even quoted Latin.[136] In this and other respects Olympiodorus was much closer to Ammianus. Like Ammianus and Eunapius, Olympiodorus was a Greek. Like Eunapius he was highly educated and a civilian. He was born in Egypt and thought of himself as a poet. Like some other more or less well known figures of his time he exploited his literary reputation to enter the imperial service.[137] We know very little about his career except hat he was employed on official missions to many and important barbarian peoples, and that he was honoured by them.[138] So in 412 he travelled with an embassy to the court of Donatus king of the Huns. While he was there, the king was "deceived by an oath and wickedly killed", and another king had to be reconciled with "regal gifts".[139] Unfortunately we do not know the precise role of Olympiodorus in this affair, which recalls the mission which the *protector* Ammianus undertook together with the general Ursicinus to the headquarters of the *magister militum* Silvanus, when the latter was suspected of planning a usurpation.[140] In what looks like another official mission he helped Leontius the father of the later empress Eudocia to obtain an appointment as sophist at Athens.[141] It would seem that he also travelled, like Herodotus, simply for the sake of exploration. In ca. 421 while on a visit to his home territory, the Thebaid in Egypt, he was invited by the leaders of the Blemmyes, who knew him by reputation, to visit the mines which had once supplied the pharaohs of Egypt with emeralds.[142] It is probable that Olympiodorus had visited Italy, and was able to describe Rome from personal experience.[143] It has been suggested that he came to Italy with the armies of Theodosius II in 425. But this would be very late in the day. From the beginning of his history Olympiodorus seems to have had at his disposal an

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öffentlichungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung XXIX (Vienna/Cologne, 1989), on 199–201: official terms, Greek and Latin transliterated into Greek found in Olympiodorus.

[135] Olympiod., Fr. 41.

[136] Zosim. 5.29, *non est ista pax sed pactio servitutis.*

[137] Alan Cameron, "Wandering poets, a literary movement in Byzantine Egypt," *Historia* 14 (1965), 470–509.

[138] Hierocles in Photius, *Bibl.Cod.* 214.

[139] Olympiod., Fr. 19.

[140] Amm.Marc., 15.5, J. Drinkwater, "Silvanus, Ursicinus and Ammianus", in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and History* VII (Brussels, 1994), 568–76.

[141] Olympiod., Fr. 28.

[142] Fr. 35.2.

[143] Fr. 41.

astonishing amount of detailed and inaccessible information from several centres of power, not only from the environment of Stilicho, but also from the court at Ravenna and the Roman senate, and indeed from leading figures in Gaul. This suggests that he was in personal contact with important figures in the West over much of the period that he was going to describe, and that they considered him sufficiently important to tell him about their experiences at length. A curious tourist could never have achieved familiarity with such people. It looks as if he performed some prestigious official duty, perhaps he was kind of roving ambassador of the Eastern emperor in the West.

Unlike Ammianus and Eunapius, Olympiodorus did not attempt to write a history of the whole Empire. His narrative is set almost exclusively in the areas invaded by Goths and Vandals, that is in Italy and Gaul and to a lesser extent Spain. He still treats these areas as part of the Roman Empire, and his history ended with an assertion of the unity of the Empire in 425, when Valentinian III was installed in the West by the armies of the Eastern emperor. So the history could be said to have been written in praise of Theodosius II, who had at last put an end to the succession of disasters by which the Western empire had been visited for so long. Olympiodorus dedicated his work to the pious Christian emperor Theodosius II.

Olympiodorus was interested in policy as well as individuals. and his assessments of both were strongly independent. This is most strikingly shown in his treatment of Stilicho, whom the Greek authorities villainised as an enemy of the East—Eunapius reproduces the official eastern view—but who was also abused as a traitor to his emperor by most western writers. Olympiodorus represents him as a hero, not only because chose to die rather than lead his loyal barbarian troops against Roman regiments, but above all because he thought that Stilicho's policy of seeking a negotiated agreement with Alaric was the right one, and that the killing of Stilicho and the subsequent abandonment of this policy had been the cause of untold evils to the Empire. Unlike Eunapius—and Ammianus—he believed in the policy of negotiated accommodation of the Goths which was initiated by Theodosius I and continued by Stilicho. Consequently his account of the long conflict between the western government and Alaric's Goths focuses on the successive futile attempts at reaching a negotiated settlement, and he is consistently critical of the failure of the Romans to be sufficiently conciliatory. Remarkably enough in view of the

damage inflicted by Alaric, Olympiodorus puts a considerable part of the blame for the disaster on the Roman side. There may be an element of hindsight in this: the imperial revival under the leadership of the *magister militum* Constantius was based on agreements with the Goths in 416 and 418. One wonders whether Olympiodorus had perhaps at some point taken part in the negotiations himself.

Like Ammianus and Eunapius, Olympiodorus was a pagan.[144] His *History* includes a significant number of incidents which teach the lesson that it is foolish to abandon the old cults, and particularly to renounce the protection afforded by consecrated images. When Alaric was besieging Rome, the authorities not only stripped images of the gods but melted down some of the gold and silver ones, among them that of Courage (*virtus*). Olympiodorus comments: "with its destruction there was extinguished whatever courage and virtue the Romans had, just as had been prophesied by men schooled in divination and ancestral ritual."[145] Two more fragments record disastrous consequences of discarding consecrated statues.[146] He expresses admiration for the general Generidus who refused to give up his ancestral religion, and who, when a law had been promulgated which excluded pagans from the imperial service, though an exception was made of himself, refused to take over a command until the law had been rescinded. Subsequently he showed himself a good general who put fear into the barbarians in Illyricum.[147] But Olympiodorus religious polemic is closer to that of Ammianus than to that of Eunapius. That means he deplored the unreason of giving up rites that—as he believed—had proved their worth, but he did not attack Christianity itself, nor did denigrate emperors, or others, just because they were Christians. Like Ammianus, Olympiodorus judged individuals by their actions, not by their religion.

The events described by Olympiodorus were of course relevant to the conflict of religions. They shook the naive optimism among Christians that the triumph of orthodoxy, the fact that the Roman state was now a Christian state, and the crushing of the usurper Eugenius, who had initiated a pagan revival, all meant that henceforth the Empire would be sure of divine support, and of victory over all

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[144] Photius, *Bibl.Cod.* 80 = Blockley, *FCH*, II, 153.
[145] Zosim. 5.41, cf. Olympiod., Fr. 7.5 = Sozomen *HE* 9.6.1–5.
[146] Frs. 16 and 27.
[147] Zosim. 5.46.

enemies. One might have expect the pagan Olympiodorus to use his history to try to discredit Christianity by emphasising the fact that the triumph of Christianity had been promptly followed by disaster. This is of course the line later taken up by Zosimus, but it is not that of Olympiodorus, whose history after all ended with the victory of Theodosius II. On the question whether the abandoning of the old cults had actually been the cause of the recent crisis, Olympiodorus' history was neutral. The challenge offered by the sack of Rome and the other disasters of early 5th century was of course taken up by Christian writers. St. Augustine argued that it was a fundamental mistake for Christians to expect that their religion would guarantee success in this world. More naively the ecclesiastical historian Sozomen maintained that God did after all in the long run help a Christian emperor to defeat usurpers and barbarians, and used bits of the narrative of Olympiodorus as evidence. It was left to Philostorgius, writing the Arian version of ecclesiastical history, to exploit the disasters suffered by the Empire, and argue that they were divine punishment for the persecution of adherents of his version of Christianity. Like Sozomen he drew his material from Olympiodorus.

Zosimus

The manuscript tradition tells us that Zosimus was an *advocatus fisci,* and that he had the rank of *comes*. His *New History* shows him to have been a pagan. That is practically all we know about him personally. Zosimus' work is the most important source for Roman history in reigns of Theodosius I and of his sons Arcadius and Honorius, crucial years, which saw the beginning of the disintegration of the Empire in the West. But the importance of Zosimus the historian does not lie in his own historical investigations, but in the fact that by some accident he preserved the work of others. Unlike Eunapius and Olympiodorus, Zosimus did not compose an historical narrative of his own. It is generally agreed that in Zosimus' *New History* chapters 1.47–5.25 are little more than a summary of Eunapius, while 5.26–6.13 summarise Olympiodorus. There is no space here to repeat the arguments.[148] But Zosimus' reluctance to engage in research of

[148] Blockley, *FCH, I,* 97–8; F. Paschoud, *Ed. passim*, and esp. the discussion of recent literature in vol. III.2, 82–99.

his own is revealed unmistakably by the way he has managed the change from his first source to the second.[149] Between 5.25 and 5.26 he passes from events of 404 in the East (from Eunapius) to events of 405 in the West (from Olympiodorus), resuming with another instalment of the story of Alaric. But Eunapius had evidently taken his account of Alaric only up to 398, ignoring Alaric's invasion of Italy in 401–402. Zosimus made no attempt to find out what Alaric had been doing in the intervening years, but goes straight from 398 to 405. Moreover while following Eunapius, he adopted Eunapius' extremely hostile portrayal of Stilicho, but from 5.26 he takes over the much more judicious and altogether more favourable view of Olympiodorus who is critical of Stilicho's and his wife Serena's impiety towards the gods, but respects his statesmanship.[150] Zosimus seems to be quite unaware of the gaps and inconsistencies in his narrative. At any rate he obviously did not undertake the research necessary to fill them.

Zosimus compiled his *History* with a definite purpose. As he tells us in his preface, he was writing a supplement to the history of Polybius. Polybius had described how within fifty three years Rome had grown to dominate the lands around the Mediterranean. He would describe how the Romans destroyed their empire by their folly "within no long period of time".[151] Zosimus' explanation of the cause of the decline emerges absolutely unambiguously: it was the direct consequence of the Romans having abandoned their ancestral religion. To convey this message Zosimus did not think it necessary to engage in historical research of his own. It was sufficient to combine two existing narratives that shared his sympathy for paganism. That the two components did not fit very well, and that on some points the two versions even contradicted one another, evidently did not worry him, given the fact that both taught the same religious lesson. That was what mattered.

But it would be surprising if an author—or perhaps more correctly 'epitomizing compiler'—who felt that he had an important message to convey, would be content with mere summarising and 'scissor and paste'. One would expect some editorial comment. In fact passages directly and explicitly making the point that the abandonment of the

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[149] See Paschoud, *Ed.*, vol. III.1, 191–6, n. 53.
[150] Zosim. 5.38.
[151] 1.1 and 57.

traditional cults had brought about the ruin of the Empire, are scattered over Zosimus' history, and it is due to these that the tendency of the treatise as a whole cannot be overlooked. These passages are conspicuous because they are digressions, which could be removed from the main story without interrupting the narrative. They are also more detailed and less 'epitomised' than the narrative in which they stand. The passages are the following:

1. The chapters dealing with oracles of the fall of Palmyra, are the earliest of these passages. The author writing in the first person, repeats, what he had already explained in the Introduction, that his theme is the reverse of that of Polybius. While Polybius had described the rapid growth of the Roman Empire, he would describe its rapid decline. He is writing about a time "when the Empire had become barbarized, shrunk to smaller size, and that too disabled".[152]

2. The second Book begins with a quite disproportionate excursus on the Secular Games at Rome, which reads as if it had been taken straight out of a book on Roman antiquities.[153] The author cites a Sibylline oracle laying down rules for the festival, and justifies his citation on the ground that the oracle had already been recited by others. He then draws the moral, which is formulated in terms recalling corresponding passages in other excursuses. As long as the ceremonies were correctly performed the Empire remained intact. But because of the omission of the Games which ought to have been held in 313, "the empire has gradually fallen into ruin, and the greater part of it 'barbarized' without our noticing it."[154]

3. In his chronological account of the reign of Constantine Zosimus gives a full description of his refounding of Byzantium/Constantinople.[155] But he returns to the theme in the course of a long and rather un-Eunapian excursus criticising Constantine's military and financial policies.[156] In the course of this he mentions that successors of Constantine provided Constantinople with another circuit of

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[152] 1.57–59.1.

[153] 2.1–8.

[154] Admittedly the fact that there is no mention of any later omission of the games, e.g. A.D. 423, is an argument that this excursus could have been in Eunapius. But what is significant is that Roman material of this kind appears only in the excursuses. That the Empire had been barbarized 'in great part' was not true of the fourth century, but became increasingly true with the progress of the fifth.

[155] 2.30–31.

[156] Zosim. II.32–9.

walls. This must be the Theodosian wall built around 413, and further strengthened in 439–47.[157] The excursus continues with an oracle which the author—using the first person—claims to have found, and which foretells that the foundation of Constantinople will be bad for the Bithynian tax-payer. The excursus ends with an account of how Constantine introduced three new taxes which continued to be exacted for long after his time, with disastrous results: "the wealth of the cities being little by little drained off, the majority have now been bereft of their inhabitants."[158] It has often been argued that such severe criticism of imperial taxes could only have been written after they had been abolished, that is after 498.[159] That is not necessarily so. But this passage could certainly only have been written after the taxes had been in operation for long time.

4. The excursus in which the author, speaking in the first person, comments on the surrender of Nisibis and other territories to the Persians: Zosimus enumerates the defeats the Romans has suffered at the hands of Parthians or Persians since the days of the Republic, and concludes that never before have the Romans surrendered territory to the Persians in the way Jovian had done. The tendency of the passage is to denigrate the Christian successor of Julian, and is the kind of thing Eunapius might well have written. However the argument from Roman, rather than Greek examples, would suit Zosimus better than Eunapius, and the concluding words "until this day the Roman emperors have been unable to recover any of them (i.e., the lands lost by Jovian), but have gradually lost even more people besides, some becoming autonomous, others surrendering to barbarians, while yet others being reduced to utter desolation" are remarkably pessimistic for anybody writing in the fourth century, but they harmonise with the pessimism of the Palmyra and the Secular Games excursuses (passages 1 and 2).[160]

5. Zosimus relates how around 375 Nestorius, the hierophant of

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[157] Soc. *HE.* 7.1.; *CT* 15.1.51 (413); *Chron Pasch.* 583 (439–41); *ILS* 823; *Chron Minor.* 2.82 (447).

[158] Zosim. 2.38.

[159] Abolition of *collatio lustralis*: Malalas 16.398: in year A.D. 498. Relevance to date of Zosimus: Pashoud, *Ed.*, vol. III.2, 80–81; so also *PLRE* II. *Zosimus* 6.

[160] Zosim. 3.32. Paschoud, *Ed.*, vol. II.1, 221–3, n. 93, argues strongly that the excursus is derived from a source also used by Ammianus, Eutropius and Festus. But the description of the Empire at the time of writing (32.6) is more appropriate to the late 5th century than to the late fourth or early 5th.

Eleusis[161] consecrated an image of the hero Achilles and placed it below the cult statue of Athena in the Parthenon.[162] Soon after when an earthquake devastated much of Greece, Athens was spared—thanks to the support of Achilles and the piety of Nestorius. Now this story could well have been told by Eunapius, who knew the hierophant, and had in fact been initiated by him,[163] and who has indeed recorded an example of the hierophant's prophetic powers. But Zosimus appears to claim that he got this particular incident not from Eunapius, but from a poem in the memoirs of the Athenian philosopher Syrianus,[164] who became head of the Neo-Platonist school at Athens in 431/2 or 433/4.[165] It would be interesting to know when Syrianus wrote the memoirs. It is surely more likely that he compiled them after he had reached the top of his profession, that is after 431/4, rather than earlier. But whenever the memoirs were written, it could not have been in time for Eunapius' first instalment, indeed probably not even for the second—depending on when he wrote that.

6. The supernatural preservation of Athens in 375 is recalled in a later narrative, relating how Athena Promachus saved Athens from capture by Alaric in 396/7.[166] It follows that if the former passage did not go back to Eunapius the latter did not either. But there is another point. As we have seen the miraculous escape of Athens is probably fictitious, and it is set in a completely distorted account of Alaric's invasions of Greece. It would also seem that Eunapius was not aware of any exceptions to Alaric's devastation of Greece and all its temples, when he wrote the *Lives of the Philosophers*.[167] Could it be that for Eunapius the destruction of the temples of Greece was simply too painful to describe in full? Is that why he merged two invasions into one, and in defiance of the true order of events, gave the story the 'happy end' of the lynching of Rufinus, that is the

[161] *PLRE* I, *Nestorius* 2.
[162] Zosim. 4.18.
[163] Eunap. *V. soph.* 7.3.2–5 (475).
[164] 4.18.4, "That this story is true may be learned from the memoirs of the philosopher Syrianus, who composed a hymn in the hero's honour, and I have inserted it here as being not irrelevant to the subject in hand".
[165] *PLRE* II, *Syrianus* 3. But Paschoud, *Ed.*, vol. II.2, 367–9, n. 138 assumes that here as elsewhere Zosimus has shamelesly borrowed Eunapius' erudition.
[166] Zosim. 5.6.3.
[167] *V. soph.* 7.3.2 (475) "the overthrow of the temples and the ruin of the whole of Greece"; also *ibid.* 8.1.11–2–3 (482).

gods' punishment of the man ultimately responsible? Even so the narrative will have evoked a melancholy mood of 'twilight of the gods'. By inserting the anecdote of Athena's preservation of her city Zosimus would have given the narrative a more positive lesson.

7. The account of the deposition and murder of Gratian by the usurper Maximus in 383 is followed by an excursus relating how Gratian had refused the title and robes of the *pontifex maximus*, perhaps in 375.[168] The purpose of the excursus is obviously to show that Gratian had been punished for refusing the traditional priesthood, a point which could well have been made by Eunapius. But the excursus begins with a brief antiquarian account of the *pontifices* and the *pontifex maximus* 24, and it ends with a double pun,[169] which only works in Latin, and would seem to come from a Latin source.

8. In the course of an alleged visit to Rome in autumn 394 the emperor Theodosius addresses the pagan senators of Rome, and asks them to convert to Christianity and at the same time suppressed the contributions to the public sacrifices at Rome from imperial funds.[170] As a result the Empire of the Romans was gradually diminished and became the home of barbarians—or rather, having lost its former inhabitants, it was ultimately reduced to a shape in which not even the places where the cites lay situate were recognizable.[171]

The pessimistic descriptions of the Empire at the time of writing bear a clear resemblance to a sentence making the same point as passages 1, 2, 3 & 4.

9. There is a back reference to the speech of Theodosius in the passage interpreting the execution of Serena, the widow of Stilicho, as a divine judgement for her sacrilege in appropriating the necklace of the image of the Great Mother (5.38).

The passages have received a full and very interesting discussion from Paschoud, who demonstrates their important function in Zosimus' history, but argues that Zosimus had already found them in the texts of Eunapius and Olympiodorus. Paschoud noticed that these passages bear a strong family resemblance. His explanation is that Eunapius

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[168] Zosim. 4.36, discussion of date n. 174 *ad loc. cit.* in Paschoud, *Ed.*, vol. II.2, 419–22.

[169] *Cinq études*, 79–82; *Ed.*, vol. 3.2, 85–6, though Alan Cameron, 'Gratian's repudiation of the pontifical robe', *JRS* 58 (1968), 96–9 argues for 383.

[170] The excursus is directly or indirectly an answer to Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, 1.408–577 of A.D. 402/3.

[171] Zosim. 4.59.

and Olympiodorus took them from the same source, a pagan polemical text written in Latin by an *ignotus*, a pagan writing after 410, who would have been a kind of Latin Eunapius.[172] He argues that the posited tract represented a response by pagan senatorial circles to the sack of Rome. It was part of that pagan reaction, which induced Orosius to write the *Histories against the Pagans* and Augustine his *City of God*.

Paschoud's theory accounts for a number of characteristics of the pagan excursuses. The fact that they share many characteristics[173] could indeed be a result of their having been derived from the same text, but it could have another explanation. The late date proposed for *ignotus* is necessary since the latest of Zosimus' digressions refers to the deaths of Stilicho and Serena in 408 A.D., while allusions in some of the digressions would imply a considerably later date still.[174] This does not rule out the theory, because Eunapius could conceivably have written his *History* as late as the second decade of the fifth century, or even later, if the reference to the 'empress Pulcheria' (Augusta A.D. 414–53) in fr. 72 of Eunapius is what he actually wrote.[175]

Nevertheless to my mind the theory is very unlikely to be correct. First of all, if there was a first instalment, and if as I have argued this was written well before 400,[176] it could not yet have included the digressions. They could only have been inserted when Eunapius prepared the second edition. But Photius tells us that the only difference between the first and the second edition was the expurgation of attacks on Christian piety from the second edition. Photius at any rate did not notice significant additions. Then, the excursuses anticipate widespread imperial and urban decline, but not specifically the sack of Rome.[177] They suggest a degree of decline which was

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[172] F. Paschoud, *Cinq études sur Zosime* (Paris, 1975), 100–83.

[173] A. The passages interrupt the narrative. B. They take a similar, and extremely pessimistic view of the state of the Empire (nos. 1, 2, 3, 4.9) C. Many, but not 3, 5 & 6 are distinctly 'western' in outlook. D. The author breaks into first person (nos. 1, 2, 3, 49).

[174] This, as Paschoud has seen, makes it impossible that even the Latin material is derived *directly* from the mysterious *Annals* of Nicomachus Flavianus, who committed suicide in 394.

[175] See above, pp. 185–186.

[176] F. Paschoud, *Ed.*, III.2, 86: "L'argumentation de Banchich (1984) aboutissant à situer la rédaction des *Vitae Sophistarum* en 399 est séduisante".

[177] Even passages 7, 8 & 9, which may well be derived from a pamphlet draw-

only reached in the 450s, after the Vandals had occupied Africa, the Goths established their kingdom in Gaul, and the Huns devastated the cities of the Balkans.

Finally and most significantly, the Introduction of Zosimus' *History* includes the statement that the history is going to describe the reversal of the process of imperial growth which had been described by Polybius. This statement of the historian's aim is repeated in the course of the Palmyra excursus.[178] Since it can hardly be denied that the Introduction was composed by Zosimus, it follows that the Palmyra excursus must also have been written by him. If so, the family likeness displayed by the other excursuses, even if not by all to the same degree, makes it likely that they too—or most of them—were composed and inserted by Zosimus.

Quite apart from the questions of chronology, the subject matter of the excursuses makes Zosimus a more likely author than Eunapius. Eunapius was after all a Hellene of Sardis, and as such not likely to have felt the need for Latin material in order to make a case for loyalty to the traditional Hellenic cults. Zosimus was an *advocatus fisci*, presumably employed at the court of the praetorian prefect of the East at Constantinople, where Roman traditions and Roman law continued to be upheld in the imperial administration. John Lydus is the best known example of a Greek administrator of the East interested in Latin antiquities. I would suggest that somebody like that—and Zosimus was such a man—would have been more likely to compose the pagan excursuses than a Greek iatro-sophist.

In his more recent writings Paschoud argues that because Zosimus can be shown to have in general followed two sources very closely, and was evidently very reluctant to search out information not readily available to him, we can altogether rule out the possibility that he ever added anything of his own. But these particular excursuses did not require very much research. The Western passages, combining antiquarian material with pagan *exempla*, might have indeed have been drawn from of a pagan treatise compiled by an unknown pagan apologist. The Eastern material is more diverse. Enthusiastic pagan that he was Zosimus, might well have been familiar with the memoirs of Syrianus. The Palmyra excursus and part of the Constantine

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ing a pagan moral from the fall of Rome, as we read them in Zosimus are not focused on the fall of Rome

[178] Zosim. 1.1.1 and 1.57.1.

excursus seem to be derived from a collection of oracles.[179] The rest of the Constantine excursus could come from a single literary attack on Constantine. We know that such existed.[180] We do not have to credit Zosimus with qualities that he shows no sign of having possessed, in order to believe him capable of editing and inserting the pagan excursuses.[181]

If the excursuses are all derived from the same source than that source must be as late as the latest reference in the excursus. Passage five, in which the hierophant saves Athens from an earthquake, seems to be derived from the memoirs of the philosopher Syrianus.[182] Passage six, relating how Athena Promachus saved Athens in 397, alludes to passage five, so it cannot be earlier.[183] This means that if a single pagan apologetic does indeed underlie all the excursuses, it would have almost certainly have been composed after A.D. 431–34.

Zosimus does not appear to have been very much concerned with the history of the Empire as such. If he had been, he would not have been content to tack a narrative almost entirely concerned with the West on to an earlier narrative dealing largely with Eastern events. Zosimus' excursuses serve a double purpose. They display the author's antiquarian learning, and/or emphasise the lesson that the ending of the ancestral cults has had disastrous consequences for the Empire. Moreover the greater emphasis is on the second of these objectives. Religion is what really matters. In the fifth century the scope of the secular was shrinking not only for Christians but even for committed pagans.

The history of Zosimus continues to puzzle. It breaks off in 410, before the sack of Rome. Its author evidently died before he had finished his project.[184] There is no indication up to what date Zosimus

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[179] Zosim. 1.57–58.3; 2.36–37.2.

[180] John Lydus, *De mag.* 2.10, 3.31–33, 40, 47 is related to Zosim. 2.33–4—as W. Goffart noticed. See "Zosimus the first historian of Rome's fall", *AHR* 76 (1971), 412–41, the main thesis of which is critically reviewed by Paschoud, *Ed.*, vol. III.2, 101–2. Perhaps Lydus and Zosimus used the same anti-Constantinian source. See also B. Bleckmann, "Bemerkungen zu den Annalen des Nicomachus Flavianus", *Historia* 44 (1995), 83–99.

[181] F. Paschoud took a similar view in *RE* 10 A, *Zosimus* 8, 824/25, but has changed his mind since.

[182] Zosim. 4.18.

[183] Zosim. 5.6.

[184] Zosim. 4.59.3 promises a detailed narrative of later history that is not in our text.

intended to take his *History*. How was he going to proceed when he had reached 425, and the end of Olympiodorus? Did he conceivably intend to continue with a history of his own time using mainly oral information as Eunapius, Ammianus and Olympiodorus had done? But then we do not know when he lived. He was cited as a source used by Eustathius of Epiphaneia writing a chronicle from the fall of Troy to the Persian war of the emperor Anastasius, breaking off in 502/3.[185] Eustathius is said to have died before he completed his work, but we do not know how many years after 502/3. It has generally been assumed that the excursus criticising the three taxes of Constantine and especially the *collatio lustralis* implies that these taxes had been abolished at the time of writing.[186] The *collatio lustralis* was abolished in 498.[187] It would follow that Zosimus wrote some time after that, in the first decade of the 6th century. But the text does not explicitly state that the taxes have been abolished. So Zosimus could be earlier. In fact the extreme pessimism on the part of a historian writing in the East—large parts of the Empire barbarised, other parts become independent, cities depopulated—would be more appropriate to the second half of the 5th century when the Huns had destroyed the cities along the Danube, an expedition against Vandals in 468 had failed disastrously, the emperors Leo and Zeno had endless difficulties with the rival Gothic federate bands of the two Theoderics, and Zeno fought for four years against the Isaurian usurper Leontius and his ally Illus. At the same time in the distant West the last emperor was deposed by the barbarian general Odovacer in 476. The revolt of Leontius and Illus was the last political movement which offered better prospects for the pagan religion, and in it pagan support was a significant factor. Perhaps Zosimus was a contemporary of Pamprepius and Proclus.

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[185] Evag. *HE* 2.15, 3.26, cf. *PLRE* II, *Eustathius of Epiphaneia* 10.

[186] Zosim. 2.38.4: ἐπιμεινάσης γὰρ καὶ μετὰ Κωνστανῖνον τῆς ἀπαιτήσεως ἐπὶ χρόνον συχνόν . . . is usually interpreted to mean to imply that at the time of writing the exaction, i.e. the *collatio lustralis*, remained no longer. But the *collatio* was only one of three exactions attacked in this passage.

[187] Josh Styl., *Chron.* 74.

Into the Fifth Century

While Ammianus had no successors in Latin, Eunapius stands at the head of a succession of Greek historians: Olympiodorus (407–25), Priscus (433–72), Malchus (474–80), Candidus (457–491), then after a gap Procopius' account of the wars of Justininan (527–53), Agathias (553–59), Menander the Guardsman (560–582), who will all be discussed later in this volume. The series ends with Theophylactus (582–602). We notice that each of these histories, except the one of Candidus, starts very close to the end-point of the previous writer in the succession, and that each of the last three deliberately wrote a continuation of his predecessor. Presumably there were historians outside the series (Eunap. fr. 66.1), but very few names have come down to us. It looks as though even in the Late Antique East the writing of 'classicising history', in contrast to the writing of literary letters and panegyrics, never became a widely practised activity among men of letters. One reason for this must have been the difficulty of getting information about events happening in exclusive official circles over so wide an area; another, surely, the absence of widespread interest in imperial history, and indeed in history as such.

In the Latin-speaking world the genre died around 400. The end of 'classicising history' in the West actually preceded the disappearance of the imperial administration. In the Greek East the genre lasted longer, but even so there was no demand for more than one version of each successive reign. Once this had been written, nobody, it would seem, thought it worth his while to revise or supplement it. The same came to be true of 'orthodox' ecclesiastical history after its 'golden age', the reign of Theodosius II. It is true that Arians and Monophysites found it necessary to produce their own versions. But they too were each satisfied with one version. In the same spirit philosophers of this age believed that there could only be one single true system of philosophy, and insisted that seemingly contradictory views of revered philosophers like Plato and Aristotle must ultimately be capable of reconciliation. The spirit of the age was not sufficiently open-minded to believe that investigation of the past could gain new insights that were worth having.

It was a defining feature of the classical historiography that it was secular, that events were as a rule explained in terms of human action. Olympiodorus was the last of the writers in this genre to be a pagan. But his Christian successors did not write from an explic-

itly Christian point of view, except Theophylact, the latest, with whom classical historiography came to an end. In fact the 'classicising' of these writers excluded not only Christian vocabulary, but also ecclesiastical topics. Ecclesiastical history came into existence as a separate genre. As society was increasingly Christianised the exclusion of ecclesiastical topics became a real weakness of the historiographical tradition, at least if the function of historical writing is to provide insight into the causes of the events it describes.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHURCH HISTORIANS (I): SOCRATES, SOZOMENUS, AND THEODORETUS*

Hartmut Leppin

I *Introduction*

The reign of Theodosius II (408–450) was an age of cultural ascendancy. The classical tradition was still vibrant, but Christian influence showed its mark, too. Poetry blossomed, continuing older motives and forms but also dealing with Christian themes; the Codex Theodosianus was drawn up, assembling the tradition of imperial legislation.

Classicising historiography found a worthy continuator in Olympiodorus; ecclesiastical historiography was as productive as never before. No less than four Church historians are known from this age: Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomenus, and Theodoretus. The works by three of them are completely or nearly completely preserved, Philostorgius' work can be reconstructed from numerous fragments in its main outlines.[1] Apart from these a so-called Christian history was written by Philippus of Side, which was certainly more directly related to the Church histories than to pagan historiography.

There are many striking resemblances between the Church histories of Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoretus: all three of them claim to continue Eusebius' Church history; all three of them are built around the reigns of Roman emperors; and their judgements on individual emperors are all very similar. For Cassiodorus (Epiphanius) and Theodorus Anagnostes those similarities were so evident that they wrote Church histories, which assembled passages from those three authors, so-called *historiae tripartitae*. Therefore, the label "synoptical Church historians" has been adopted in the language of modern

* Many thanks to John Drinkwater for his help.

[1] This Herculean task has been achieved by J. Bidez and F. Winkelmann (Berlin, 1981).

research to describe the work of Socrates, Sozomenus, and Theodoretus. More recent studies have, however, highlighted the differences between them,[2] which will also be underlined in this contribution. Therefore the term "synoptical", which is sometimes useful, is written in inverted commas here.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to how the cluster of Church histories in the reign of Theodosius II is to be explained. The phenomenon seems to be a symptom of the consolidation of Christian faith in Roman state and society. On the other hand, the necessity of defending the orthodox interpretation of history against heretical concepts, which retained a certain allure for many, was without doubt widely felt.[3]

One thing is clear: paganism is not the main target of the polemics of these historians. Although they like to write triumphalist accounts of the destruction of pagan sanctuaries, the victory over the pagans is generally taken for granted. The main enemy is heterodoxy, especially homeanism, and all those confessions that are labelled as Arian in the Athanasian tradition. This observation makes the Church history of Philostorgius, not to be dealt with here, the more valuable, because he was an adherent of Eunomius, and thus, in the eyes of his "colleagues", an Arian. In any case, the Church histories of the Theodosian age give a colourful impression of the plurality of theological and political (not only in terms of Church policy) concepts of this age.[4]

II *The Authors*

1. *Lives*

A. *Socrates*

Socrates is known only from his own writings.[5] He was a native of Constantinople, where he grew up and wrote his Church history.

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[2] H. Leppin, *Von Constantin dem Großen zu Theodosius II. Das christliche Kaisertum bei den Kirchenhistorikern Socrates, Sozomenus und Theodoret* (Hypomnemata 110), Göttingen, 1996; T. Urbainczyk, "Observations on the Differences between the Church Histories of Socrates and Sozomenus", *Historia* 46 (1997), 355–373; id., *Socrates of Constantinople. Historian of Church and State* (Ann Arbor, 1997).

[3] See Marasco in this volume.

[4] All translations are based on the respective NPNF-volumes.

[5] For his life see Leppin, *op. cit.*, 10ff.; see T. Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople*,

His date of birth lay in the period 380–390. He was educated by pagan *grammatici*[6] and probably received a rhetorical training. His humble style cannot be put forward in evidence against this supposition, because it corresponded to certain ideals of Christian literature.[7] He was certainly to some extent familiar with concepts of classical culture, but it is not certain whether this reached farther than he made explicit in his work. Socrates must have died after 439.

His exact social position remains unclear. The traditional surname "Scholasticus", which would point to a position as a jurist, is certainly late, probably given to him in analogy to Evagrius Scholasticus, who was indeed an advocate. Several points tell against the idea that he was a jurist. There is no sign of any legal training in his work. The personal contacts he names have no political or administrative functions. He certainly had no links to court society.[8] Since he felt competent to give theological judgements and knew many bishops personally, most likely he held some position in the Church.

Also controversial is his theological stance. Although there is no doubt that he adhered to the orthodox theology in terms of the canons of the Council of Nicaea (325), it remains unclear whether he was a member of the dominant orthodox Church or of the Novatian sect which, for example, in respect of penitence, accepted more rigorous standards[9] and which holds a surprisingly prominent position in Socrates' Church history. Since Henri de Valois (17th century) there had been a consensus that Socrates did not belong to the Novatians. This was founded on the interpretation of 5.19.10, where he intimates a position critical to a particular reform in ecclesiastical institutions, which made the main Church more similar to the Novatian. Recently, Wallraff has been able to show that this interpretation is not cogent and has even gone so far as to declare that Socrates was a Novatian,[10] convincing most of his reviewers.[11]

13ff.; M. Wallraff, *Der Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates. Untersuchungen zu Geschichtsdarstellung, Methode und Person* (Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte 68) (Göttingen, 1997), 209ff.

[6] Socrat., *HE* 5.16.9.

[7] Socrat., *HE* 6. pr. 2–5; 7.27.5.

[8] Cf. Socrat., *HE* 7.22.1, where he rejects the idea that he wants to become known at the court by his work.

[9] M. Wallraff, "Geschichte des Novatianismus seit dem vierten Jahrhundert im Osten", *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 1 (1997), 251–279.

[10] *Op. cit.* 1997, 235ff.

[11] For example St. Rebenich, *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 4 (2000), 392–395, 394;

I still hold to the minority position that Socrates did not belong to the Novatians. My main reason is that the alleged Novatian did not write a history of the Novatian Church (although he was well informed on it), but of the main Church, numbering the Novatians among the "others".[12] Why should a Novatian have written the history of another Church? The work of Philostorgius shows that an alternative narrative of Church history was feasible.

This problem is conspicuous in the treatment of the Council of Nicaea. Socrates gives a lengthy account of this assembly,[13] although he knows (and tells his readers) that in the eyes of the Novatians the Council was unnecessary, because it did nothing but confirm the ancient dogmas.[14] In my opinion, the lengthiness of the account would be inexplicable in a Novatian source.

Even Socrates' integrative attitude towards heresies and his wish to unite as many Christian groups as possible is no sign of a specifically Novatian position. This corresponds to pragmatic positions which were widely held, especially in Constantinople, whereas the tendency to underline differences and to fight aggressively against deviant theologians is typical for certain ecclesiastical groups. The latter are well represented in the literary tradition and are therefore easily overestimated. More important than these details is that Socrates, no matter whether he was a Novatian or not, was by necessity dogmatically and politically committed to the Nicaean Church, because the Novatians were not persecuted in the Theodosian age but accepted as orthodox in the literal sense.

Socrates says that he was encouraged to write his Church history by one Theodorus, a *holy man of God*.[15] The identification of this man, who probably was a monk or a cleric, is impossible. If Socrates refers to someone like him, it seems plausible that he reckoned to have among his readers members of Church milieux. On the other hand, he thinks it necessary to explain several theological items and words, which suggests that he hopes to win also a readership outside such circles. All his work shows that he is emotionally near to the bishops of Constantinople, whereas the flaws of holders of rivalling Episcopal

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but see J. Ulrich, s.v. Sokrates, *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, ed. S. Döpp and W. Geerlings (Freiburg, 1998), 562f.

[12] Socrat., *HE* 5.20.1.

[13] Socrat., *HE* 1.7–13.

[14] Socrat., *HE* 1.10.1–4.

[15] Socrat., *HE* 2.1.6; 6, pr. 1; 7.48.7.

sees, such as those of Alexandria or Rome, are often highlighted.

Socrates' writing of his Church history did not go smoothly. At the beginning of the second book he informs his readers that he had had to draw up a second version of his work, because he had relied on Rufinus too heavily before;[16] he had detected that this historian had made serious chronological errors regarding Constantine the Great. This revision extended at least until the sixth book, where it is obvious that a chapter of the former version has been preserved.[17]

For the date of the composition of his Church history as we have it, we possess a reliable *terminus post quem*, namely 439.[18] The *terminus ante quem* is the death of Theodosius II on 28 July 450, because the text supposes the emperor to be alive. Besides, Sozomenus and probably Theodoretus, who also wrote during the lifetime of Theodosius, used Socrates' work. Most scholars maintain a date shortly after 439; I myself have proposed a date closer to the mid-440s, for the reason that sharp polemic against Cyrillus, bishop of Alexandria, in an author who wants to promote peace in the Church seems to be more conceivable after the bishop's death in 444.[19] But this suggestion is certainly not cogent and has not won acceptance as yet.[20]

B. *Sozomenus*

The second "synoptical" Church historian, Sozomenus [or Salamanes Hermeias Sozomenos, to give him his full Greek name], is not otherwise known,[21] but his work gives various clues to his life.[22] He was born into a Christian family from Bethelea near Gaza about 380. His grandfather had been converted to the Christian faith and the family had suffered from persecution under Julian. Sozomenus himself came to Constantinople in 425/6 at the earliest; there he worked as a lawyer. When he wrote his Church history he had already been

[16] Socrat., *HE* 2.1.1–4.
[17] Socrat., *HE* 6.11.9–20.
[18] Socrat., *HE* 7.48.8.
[19] Socrat., *HE* 7.7.2–5; 7.13–15; 7.34.
[20] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 274ff.; cf. Wallraff's criticism (*op. cit. Der Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates*, 210f.).
[21] The identification with the homonymous *domesticus* of the pretorian prefect in *Oriens* about 435/6 (proposed in *PLRE* II 1023f.) is speculative.
[22] For his life, see B. Grillet, "Introduction", in *Sozomène, Histoire ecclésiastique. Livres I–II*, SCh 306 (Paris 1983), 9–58; Hansen, *op. cit. Sokrates*, LXIVff.; Leppin, *op. cit.*, 13ff.

baptized. The historian seems to have undertaken voyages as far as Rome. He died probably not long after 446.

His Church history was not completed and breaks off in the ninth book. It is based on Socrates,[23] but is written in a significantly more rhetorical style. In his dedication and at the beginning of the ninth book Sozomenus ably uses the technique of panegyric.[24] This major difference between Sozomenus and Socrates should not lead to the conclusion that their educational levels were different, because both authors made a conscious decision to write in the style which they thought suitable for Church historiography. The Church history is not the only work which Sozomenus wrote. He mentions a completely lost Epitome dealing with the period from the Ascension to the death of Licinius.[25]

His intended public consists of well-educated people who enjoyed literary style and disliked studying long canons or theological letters. Many of his potential readers were obviously in need of fundamental information about Christian religion. As he is the most polemical against paganism among the Church historians, he seems to have expected to find some pagans or paganizers in his readership. On the other hand, he considers readers who would like to live as monks.[26]

Sozomenus was in all probability near to members of the imperial court, especially Pulcheria, Theodosius' sister, whose qualities and influence on her brother are praised at the beginning of Book Nine.[27] She had been a dominant figure during the first years of Theodosius' reign, but in the 440s her relationship with her brother was strained, because she favoured a considerably more aggressive policy against those groups which were to become regarded as monophysites.

The date of composition of Sozomenus' work[28] depends on the dating of that of Socrates, which varies between 439 and 446. It is evident that Sozomenus used, revised and complemented that work.

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[23] That Socrates was prior is proved by the general impression that Sozomenus often elaborated on Socrates and by a detail: in *HE* 1.10 Socrates declares that he personally had received information from a witness. The notice is repeated by Sozomenus (*HE* 1.22) without any clear hint as to the source.

[24] Sozomen., *HE* 9.1.

[25] Sozomen., *HE* 1.1.12.

[26] Sozomen., *HE*, Ded. 18.

[27] Sozomen., *HE* 9.1–3.

[28] See C. Roueché, "Theodosius II, the Cities, and the Date of the Church History of Sozomenus", *Journ. Theol. Stud.* 37 (1986), 130–132; Leppin, *op. cit.*, 279ff.

The *terminus ante quem* is again Theodosius' death, and probably also that of Pulcheria's sister, Marina, on 3 August 449, because Sozomenus mentions the sisters without alluding to any bereavement. As he presupposes peace in Church,[29] a date before 448, when the controversies revived, seems plausible.

C. *Theodoretus*

Theodoretus was a prominent figure in Church politics during the reign of Theodosius II.[30] Born into a well-off family in Antioch about 393, he was early dedicated to a life in the service of Christ by his mother and maintained close contacts with the monks in the region of Antioch. Although he was deeply imbued with Christian teachings, he received a traditional intellectual education. At an early age he became a monk; in 423 he was consecrated Bishop of the small town of Cyrrus. Being ambitious, he nevertheless spent a lot of time in Antioch and became a leading contestant in the christological debates between Antiochenes and Alexandrians, which first culminated in the Council of Ephesus in 431. In this synod he participated personally, also meeting Theodosius II, whose behaviour disappointed him. After the failure of the council a formula of union was proposed to which Theodoretus gave his assent reluctantly, although he had contributed to it intellectually. Years of relative peace followed, yet in 444/5 the Bishop was involved in a regional dispute and felt that the imperial government discriminated against him.[31] In the course of the so-called Robbers' Synod of 449 he was deposed and afterwards duly exiled, to be rehabilitated and reinstated by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. He returned to Cyrrus, where he died during the period 460/466.

Theodoretus was a prolific author, who wrote works in several genres,[32] mainly in order to defend his theology and politics. As he was a radical exponent of Antiochene, dyophysite theology, the Fifth Ecumenical Council of 553 condemned several of his works.

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[29] Sozomen., *HE* 9.1.9.

[30] For his life, see H.G. Opitz, "Theodoretos", *RE* V A 2 (1934), 1791–1801; Y. Azéma, "Théodoret de Cyr", *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* 15 (1991), 418–435; Leppin, *op. cit.*, 15ff.; cf. also now T. Urbainczyk, *Theodoret of Cyrrhus: The bishop and the holy man* (Ann Arbor, 2002) (n.v.).

[31] H. Leppin, "Zum kirchenpolitischen Kontext von Theodorets Mönchsgeschichte", *Klio* 78 (1996), 212–230.

[32] See *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 6200–6288.

Nevertheless, he had his Nicene orientation in common with Socrates and Sozomenus, even if his sympathies with Nestorius were evident.

Theodoretus is the only one of the three who is not connected to Constantinople. In several passages of his Church history his Syriac perspective is tangible. The public he writes for is decidedly orthodox and he believes it to be willing to read long dogmatic texts. There is no indication of any pagan sympathies in his intended readership.

The date of his Church history is controversial.[33] Previously, it seemed to be established that Theodoretus wrote it during the years of his exile, but this has been questioned with strong (if not completely compelling) reasons. Again, the death of Theodosius II is the *terminus ante quem*; the latest safely datable event mentioned in the Church history is the translation of John Chrysostom's relics to Constantinople in 438. However, as Theodoretus alludes to his *Historia religiosa*, which is now generally dated at 444, he must have finished his history after this. His visible interest in emperors who have been misled by evil, heretical advisers may be understood as a reaction to his own experiences since 448, which would suggest a return to the traditional date. In any case, Theodoretus wrote his Church history after having been discriminated against by imperial decisions, which he must have interpreted as wrong and dangerous to the true faith.

2. *Sources*

All Church historians are authors who compose and formulate their works consciously, following clear principles; none of them simply reproduces his sources. All the same, the foundations of their knowledge and judgement are their sources. Many of them can be ascertained. Nevertheless, studies of special problems may still produce new ideas about them.[34]

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[33] See G.F. Chesnut, "The Date of Composition of Theodoret's Church History", *Vet. Christ.* 35 (1981), 245–252; B. Croke, "Dating Theodoret's Church History and Commentaries of the Psalms", *Byzantion* 54 (1984), 59–74; Leppin, *op. cit.*, 281f.

[34] See, e.g. recently T.D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius. Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Mass. and London), 1993; P. van Nuffelen, "La tête de l'histoire acéphale'", *Klio* 84 (2002), 125–140.

A. *Socrates*[35]

There were two elder Church histories which covered the time from Constantine to Theodosius I and which could provide an outline for Socrates' work, that of Gelasius of Caesarea and that of Rufinus of Aquileia.[36] Socrates had used Rufinus extensively in the first version of his work and apparently even consulted the Greek translation by Paeanius.[37] After having read through Athanasius, he became more critical, but arguably he still consulted him. Gelasius of Caesarea, an earlier continuator of Eusebius, who was also used by Rufinus, is never named by Socrates, but is widely regarded as fundamental to his work because of correspondences between his text and that of the so-called Gelasius of Cyzicus, who, in numerous passages of his Church history, almost certainly followed his alleged namesake from Caesarea. This thesis is well argued, but necessarily based on various assumptions, which are debatable (although they are not debated currently, as far as I can see).

A number of theological writings are detectable among Socrates' sources. Most important are Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*, Athanasius' writings, the collection of synodal acts composed by Sabinus of Heracleia (an adherent of the Macedonian confession), and lists of bishops.

Socrates does not avoid secular sources such as Eutropius' *Breviarium ab urbe condita* or a Latin chronicle of Constantinople, which is naturally very important for chronological questions. Even pagans such as Libanius and Julian are cited, and in two cases he refers to epic poems, which are known only by name.[38] There is no sign of any knowledge of legal sources.

Exceptionally important for Socrates is the oral tradition, which he obtains from personal contacts. Among these is the Novatian priest Auxanon, who even remembered details regarding the Council

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[35] F. Geppert, *Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Sokrates Scholasticus* (Leipzig, 1898; repr. Aalen, 1972); Hansen, *op. cit. Sokrates*, XLIIIff.; Wallraff, *op. cit. Der Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates*, 185ff.

[36] See for the background F. Winkelmann, "Zur nacheusebischen christlichen Historiographie des 4. Jahrhunderts", in G. Makris and C. Scholz (eds.), ΠΟΛΥΠΛΕΥΡΟΣ ΝΟΥΣ *Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* (Byz. Archiv 19) (Munich and Leipzig, 2000), 404–414.

[37] P. Périchon, "Eutrope ou Paeanius? L'historien Socrate se referait-il à une source latine ou grecque?", *REG* 81 (1968), 378–384.

[38] Socrat., *HE* 3.21.14 (Callistus); 6.6.36 (Eusebius Scholasticus with his Ganais).

of Nicaea. It is understandable that most of the personal witnesses are cited for events near to Socrates' own lifetime.

B. *Sozomenus*[39]

Sozomenus' (nowhere mentioned)[40] main source is Socrates, but his independence should not be undervalued. He did much more than rework Socrates stylistically. Several sources used by Socrates were again consulted by Sozomenus. This holds true, e.g. for Rufinus, Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*, and Athanasius. Moreover, he produces more documentary sources, which he probably took over from the collections, particularly (again) that of Sabinus of Heraclea. Otherwise, he relies on several monastic histories, for example Palladius' *Historia Lausiaca*. In the ninth book, which is not completely preserved, Sozomenus made extensive use of the secular historian Olympiodorus. This explains the remarkable prominence of detailed secular events in these passages. Presumably, he also integrated material from Syriac sources. Very important for Sozomenus and for the problem of his reliability is the fact that he was well versed in legal texts.[41] In many passages he integrates laws in his account in a very independent (that is often wrong!) way.[42] But his mistakes involve mainly the contextualisation of the texts and not their content, which he understands well.

C. *Theodoretus*[43]

Theodoretus may have known Socrates and (less probably) Sozomenus.[44] As long as all the possible common sources, such as Gelasius of Caesarea, are poorly known, certainty cannot be reached on this question. Doubtlessly he used Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*. There are good reasons to suppose that Theodorus of Mopsuestia's works on heresies served him well. Theodoretus may have used local sources for many details regarding martyrs and bishops. Moreover, his own

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[39] G. Schoo, *Die Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Sozomenos* (Berlin, 1911; repr. Aalen, 1973); Hansen, *op. cit. Sozomenus*, XLIVff.; 528ff.

[40] In *HE* 1.1.13 Sozomenus even suggests that *HE* had no predecessor at all.

[41] Sozomen., *HE* 1.1.13.

[42] J. Harries, *Sozomenus and Eusebius: The Lawyer as Church Historian in the Fifth Century*, in C. Holdsworth and T.P. Wiseman (eds.), *The Inheritance of Historiography 350–900* (Exeter, 1986), 45–52.

[43] Parmentier, *op. cit.* LXXIIIff.

[44] Hansen, *op. cit. Sokrates*, XXVf. argues that Theodoretus used Socrates; cf. id., *Theodoret*, 434ff., where he also affirms that Theodoretus used Sozomenus.

experiences, which he had partially recorded in his *Historia religiosa*, went into his Church history, as well as information which he received from personal conversations or letters. Beyond that, numerous documents are inserted into Theodoretus' Church history which probably stem from the usual collections, but probably also from the Antiochene archives.

Although the Church historians had many sources in common and at least to some extent knew each other, there are remarkable differences in their selection and use of sources. This is highly influenced by their respective ideas on Church history and Church politics.

III *Character of the Works*

The term "synoptical" Church historians is based on superficial observation. Whoever reads those works carefully will come across many differences which cannot be explained by the use of divergent sources, but must be ascribed to differences in their respective *Weltanschauungen*. I will first illustrate the differences by three examples; then I shall proceed to examine them systematically.

A. *Differences between the "synoptical" Church historians. Some examples*

The Council of Nicaea of 325[45] was fundamental to the Church history of the fourth century, because in the 350s Athanasius was to make the *homoousios* propounded by this council the main point of reference for assessing Christian orthodoxy. Therefore the council merited extensive treatment in every Church history which covered those years, and this treatment was bound to be of major importance for the treatment of all councils that followed. In the perspective of the Church historians, who lived in a time when a number of councils were held under imperial influence, the role of the emperor must have been paramount. The right to convoke and to steer councils could be a key power of rulers in late antiquity, the extent of which was still in dispute.

Socrates, Sozomenus and Theoderet all regard Constantine's convocation of the council as a laudable act, which was unavoidable

[45] See Leppin, *op. cit.*, 53ff.

since the main contestants themselves had not been able to find a common solution.[46] Socrates[47] is closest to Eusebius,[48] whom he cites word for word at length. The emperor arrives when the bishops are fully assembled, demonstrating his deep respect for them. He sits down only after having been invited to do so. Then he delivers a speech, in which he makes an appeal for unity. Afterwards the discussion—a passage which is taken over directly from Eusebius—shows the emperor as a patient moderator who directs the bishops to unity by listening to their words and giving or refusing his assent. Thus, the emperor appears to be a competent judge in theological affairs. The creed is not formulated by him, but it can materialize only with his help. After the council the emperor does his best to make the decisions work, by exiling Arius and his friends and by communicating the decrees to his subjects.

Sozomenus ascribes a seemingly stronger position to the emperor:[49] after their first debates the bishops are convoked in the imperial palace. After the emperor has taken his seat on the throne, the bishops are allowed to sit down on their benches; it is their turn to show respect. Yet, interestingly, the emperor's role during the debates is less prominent than in Socrates. While the bishops are discussing, a consensus emerges which is accepted by the emperor as god-given. After the council he puts the decrees into action, as he did according to Socrates. It is also significant that Sozomenus is the only author to take over the following element from Eusebius' account: the invitation of the bishops to Constantine's vicennalia,[50] which connects the ecclesiastical event with a political one.

Finally, Theodoretus.[51] His emperor is full of respect (*aidós*) for the bishops; he looks up to them like a child who loves his parents. He asks whether he might participate and takes one of the seats, not a special throne. Bishops and emperor sit down at the same time. The ruler gives a speech at the beginning, but is silent during the debates themselves. After the bishops have taken their decisions, the emperor does whatever is necessary to implement them.

These extremely diverse accounts of the same event, which are

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[46] Socrat., *HE* 1.7; Sozomen., *HE* 1.16–17.1; Theodoret., *HE* 1.7.1.
[47] Socrat., *HE* 1.8.
[48] Eus., *V. Const.* 3.5–14.
[49] Cf. esp. Sozomenus. *HE* 1.19f.
[50] Sozomen., *HE* 1.21.4f.
[51] Theodoret., *HE* 1.7–10.

based on only slightly different sources, show how free the Church historians feel in their treatment of the tradition. In the end, the "facts" they give depend on their view of the ideal emperor or the ideal council.

The second example relates to the emperor Jovian, who reigned only a few months. Since he was regarded in the Nicene tradition as an orthodox emperor, his early death, which under normal circumstances would have been interpreted as a sign of God's wrath, required an explanation. Socrates simply refers to a natural cause: constipation.[52] Sozomenus, who does not conceal that Jovian was considered gluttonous, is not sure whether his death was brought about by his excessive meals or by poisonous vapours in his chamber.[53]

Completely different is Theodoretus. Jovian dies after having received the last rites (perhaps even baptism), and he does not die from a luxurious life, but because he was too good for this world.

> After distinguishing the beginning of his reign by edicts of this (*sc.* orthodox) kind, Jovian set out from Antioch for the Bosphorus; but at Dadastanae, a village lying on the confines of Bithynia and Galatia, he died. He set out on his journey from this world with the grandest and fairest support and stay, but all who had experienced the clemency of his sway were left behind in pain. So, me-thinks, the Supreme Ruler, to convict us of our iniquity, both shews us good things and again deprives us of them; so by the former means He teaches us how easily He can give us what He will; by the latter He convicts us of our unworthiness of it, and points us to the better life.[54]

As so often, Theodoretus shows a remarkable inclination to impute a deeper theological understanding to an incident which is regarded by others as the result of a bad life or contingent circumstances.

Thirdly, a military event, the battle of Frigidus in 394. Theodosius was victorious against the allegedly pagan usurper Eugenius, but at the cost of heavy losses, because on the first day of the battle his Goths, who had to get through a defile, were decimated. It is clear that all three Church historians give the same general judgement. The Christian emperor won against an enemy flawed by his pagan sympathies; his losses are not seen as being serious.

But seemingly superficial differences demonstrate the divergent

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[52] Socrat., *HE* 3.26.5.
[53] Sozomen., *HE* 6.6.1.
[54] Theodoret., *HE* 4.5.

attitudes of the authors. Socrates[55] ignores the fact that the battle lasted over two days, but he is aware that there were two phases of fighting. In the first, the Romans among Theodosius' soldiers were a match for the Romans in the ranks of Eugenius; only the barbarians were driven back. Perceiving the critical situation, Theodosius threw himself on the ground and began to pray. This brought about a complete change. Bacurius put the enemies to flight; at the same time a miracle came about. A strong storm blew the missiles, which Eugenius' men had thrown, back towards them. Thus Theodosius' prayer won the battle. Socrate combines a military explanation with a miraculous one.

Sozomenus goes into greater detail.[56] Theodosius, while in the Alps, is encircled by Eugenius' troops. He suffers serious losses in the vanguard while already under attack from the rear. Realising the hopelessness of his position, the emperor throws himself on the ground and begins a tearful prayer. He gets an immediate result. The leaders of the troops who surround him offer to change sides, if they are granted sufficient recognition. The emperor does not find paper and pen, but takes a tablet on which to write down which military offices they will earn—the fact that what they did was an act of treason is nowhere reflected. Then the battle in the vanguard is decided by the miraculous storm. To this is adjoined a Constantinopolitan anecdote. At the time of the battle a demon appears in the Church of John Baptist at the Hebdomon, which had been built by Theodosius, slandering John but confessing his own defeat.

In Theodoretus the story of the battle appears in an extremely stylised form.[57] Against all the odds the emperor, trusting in God and in God alone, is triumphant over the pagan usurper. He even dismisses his barbarian allies before the combat. His prayer does not take place in a crisis, but during the night before the battle a dream announces the victory to him and to a soldier. Although the foe surpasses Theodosius' troops in number many times over, Theodosius is victorious because (and only because) of a miracle, which makes the enemy soldiers change sides.

It is evident again that Socrates is the most sober and most pragmatic among the Church historians, whereas Theodoretus is most

[55] Socrat., *HE* 5.25.11–14.
[56] Sozomen., *HE* 7.24.3–9.
[57] Theodoret., *HE* 5.24.3–17.

consistent in respect of theological aspects and Sozomenus' approach lies between those of his colleagues, since he has an intimate knowledge of political affairs but is also very impressed by the religious facets of historical events. Theodoretus' aspiration towards theological consistency has grave consequences for his reliability as a historical source. He has no qualms about stylising or, to put it bluntly, of falsifying history. For example, contrary to the chronological order, he makes the rebellion of Antioch (387)[58] happen after the act of penitence in Milan (389/90)[59] in order to show how far Ambrose's influence went. He was, according to Theodoretus, even (indirectly) responsible for the act of clemency towards the Antiochenes. Even though modern historians are frustrated by Theodoretus' untrustworthiness, one should not forget that he fulfilled what he considered as his principal task, that is to give his readers an idea of God's involvement in history, which is from a religious viewpoint obviously much more important than any circumstantial detail.

B. *God and the course of history*

The Church histories should not be considered as theological works, but they certainly have a theological dimension since their authors have to write the history of the true faith and its exponents. All three are convinced Nicenes. Although it is not their task to argue the theological correctness of Nicene dogmas, they have to illustrate the victory of the faithful in history.

This victory is difficult to show in turbulent times. Eusebius' optimism regarding the victory of true Christianity and the establishment of a Christian Empire had been found wanting by the wars between Christian confessions and by manifest failures of Rome in the course of the secular wars during the fourth century, which could not all be ascribed to the mistakes of the pagan Julian and the heretic Valens.

Yet from a Christian perspective victories of another kind were possible, namely the triumphs of individual holy men over their enemies, be they pagans or heretics, as well as miracles and acts of martyrdom.[60] Therefore, the three Church histories are full of events

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[58] Theodoret., *HE* 5.20.

[59] Theodoret., *HE* 5.18.

[60] See for the miracles L. Cracco Ruggini, "The Ecclesiastical Histories and the Pagan Historiography: Providence and Miracles", *Athenaeum* 55 (1977), 107–126.

which illustrate and reinforce the power of holy men and women. Sozomenus and Theodoretus, in particular, lay great stress on the importance of monks. This is perfectly in keeping with Theodoretus, but also suits the more metropolitan Sozomenus. The fascination for holy men is by no means an apolitical attitude; rather it corresponded to the development of political culture in the fifth century. Holy men became more important, and Sozomenus's probable protectress Pulcheria, who strove for an image of chastity if not holiness, was among their most influential patrons. In this sense, Sozomenus grasped the political situation better than the more down-to-earth Socrates.

Another aspect is more intricate. Eusebius' optimism had only in part been motivated theologically; his praise of the felicity under the reigning emperor was also the manifestation of a long-standing panegyrical tradition. This tradition is palpable in Socrates and Sozomenus. Both of them heap praise on the ruling emperor Theodosius II, and neither apparently sees a contradiction between the glorification of their own time and their Christian view of secular times and of the End of Days, when Jesus Christ will return.

Sozomenus sticks firmly to the tradition of the panegyric, although he enriches it with some Christian overtones. Not only Theodosius, to whom the *Dedicatio* is given, is praised in panegyrical words, but also Pulcheria, his sister, at the beginning of the ninth book. Here, the Christian slant is much more evident, but the passage remains within the panegyrical tradition.

Socrates seems to be more independent in the two chapters which praise Theodosius. He begins by denying the idea that he is going to write a panegyric, which is the surest sign that he will be doing exactly this.[61] However, his panegyric is more imbued with Christian concepts than Sozomenus's. Theodosius appears as the incarnation of Christian life.[62] A kind of second panegyric is found in 7.42. In this chapter Theodosius' clemency is extolled and regarded as the decisive reason for Roman victories.

The last chapter of the whole work seems to be in keeping with this line of thinking. After having mentioned that Thalassius, a praetorian prefect designate, had been made Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, Socrates carries on rather surprisingly:

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[61] Socrat., *HE* 7.21.10.
[62] Socrat., *HE* 7.22.1–19.

> In such a flourishing condition were the affairs of the Church at this time. But we shall here close our history, praying that the Churches everywhere, with the cities and provinces, may live in peace; for as long as peace continues, those who desire to write histories will find no materials for their purpose. And we ourselves, O holy man of God, Theodore, should have been unable to accomplish in seven books the task we undertook at your request, had the lovers of seditions chosen to be quiet.[63]

What will the contemporary readers have taken this remark to mean? They knew about the manifold dangers which menaced peace. They knew about the endless series of theological quarrels. Did Socrates mean to be ironic in this passage?

Plainly different from both his "colleagues" is Theodoretus. His work lacks panegyrical passages, flattering politicians of his own age. He is, on the other hand, tactful enough not to point up weaknesses in Theodosius' reign (and being a victim of the emperor's politics he could have said a lot about this), but he writes at length on the contemporary persecution of Christians in Persia. To this digression he adds a significant reflection.

> Innumerable other similar deeds of violence were committed by these impious men, but we must not be astonished that the Lord of all endures their savagery and impiety, for indeed before the reign of Constantine the Great all the Roman emperors wreaked their wrath on the friends of the truth, and Diocletian, on the day of the Saviour's passion, destroyed the Churches throughout the Roman Empire, but after nine years had gone by they rose again in bloom and beauty many times larger and more splendid than before, and he and his iniquity perished.
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> These wars and the victory of the Church had been predicted by the Lord, and the event teaches us that war brings us more blessing than peace. Peace makes us delicate, easy and cowardly. War whets our courage and makes us despise this present world as passing away. But these are observations which we have often made in other writings.[64]

The ideal, peaceful state of affairs, which has been reached according to the panegyrical passages in Socrates and Sozomenus, is not desirable according to Theodoretus. Again, his theological consistency is evident. The purpose of history is not to aggrandize the Roman Empire, but to teach people how to live pious lives.

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[63] Socrat., *HE* 7.48.6f.
[64] Theodoret., *HE* 5.39.24–26.

Historical causation is a thorny issue for the Church historians, because they always have to consider God's might and human behaviour at the same time. Unsurprisingly, there are several levels of historical explanation in their works, the relation of which is nowhere elucidated. On the one hand, God is obviously the master of whatever happens and providence is ultimately responsible for everything. God's will is steering history by means of the Holy Spirit. One example of this are the proceedings of the Council of Nicaea. Bishops and perhaps the emperor decide on the decrees of this council, and the decision-making process is described in detail, but in the end its decisions are regarded as the work of the Holy Spirit, who creates the consensus. God's force is opposed by the Devil, who is ultimately responsible for all the problems of Christianity, in particular the existence of heretics.[65]

On the other hand, all historical texts of antiquity have to concentrate on the doing of individuals. They can act well or badly. Staying with the Council of Nicaea, the participants—bishops, monks and the emperor—struggle for the right doctrine and fight heretics. In the end they express the will of the Holy Spirit, whereas the heretics, people like Arius, are driven by the Devil. In their account of the battle of Frigidus, Socrates and Sozomenus combine the heroism or treason of military leaders with the miracle of the storm, which is prompted by Theodosius' praying. This manner of explanation results in a double causality: history is God-worked and man-worked at the same time. Therefore, although the Church histories tell the story of God's influence on history, they can simultaneously create extremely personalised narratives.

This seeming inconsistency regarding historical causality in the Church histories should be seen in the context of a theological issue: the problem of free will. This problem obviously was not of central importance to Eastern theologians. Apparently, the double causality of the will of God and the will of man was generally accepted. The Church historians never bother to discuss these subtleties.

In one passage Socrates exhibits an element of what may be considered as a kind of philosophy of history: the convergence between

[65] For the nuanced position towards hereticism, see P. Allen, "The Use of Heretics and Heresies in the Greek Church Historians: Studies in Socrates and Theodoret", in G. Clarke (ed.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Rushcutters Bay, 1990), 265–289.

incidents in the history of the Empire and the Church. He defines as one of his historiographical aims that

> it might be made apparent, that whenever the affairs of the State were disturbed, those of the Church, as if by some vital sympathy, became disordered also. Indeed whoever shall attentively examine the subject will find, that the mischiefs of the State, and the troubles of the Church have been inseparably connected; for he will perceive that they have either arisen together, or immediately succeeded one another. Sometimes the affairs of the Church come first in order; then commotions in the State follow, and sometimes the reverse, so that I cannot believe this invariable interchange is merely fortuitous, but am persuaded that it proceeds from our iniquities; and that these evils are inflicted upon us as merited chastisements, if indeed as the apostle truly says, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after."[66]

The English word sympathy corresponds to the Greek *sympátheia*. This concept has a Stoic background, but its usage by Socrates is not very deeply considered.[67] It aims simply at giving a concise expression to a banal observation and cannot support the thesis that Socrates' historical thinking has been influenced by pagan philosophy. He himself *de facto* gives up the concept of *sympátheia*, when he refers to sin as the real cause of trouble. This idea is obviously Christian in character. But again, it is evident that a Church historian is able to treat historical causality on two levels: abstract and personalised.

There is another kind of "sympathy" between developments in different fields. Natural catastrophes, such as floods, earthquakes, plagues of locusts, even military defeats are expressions or better expressed results of "bad" government in the sense of dogmatically deviant government. On the other hand, "good" government is accompanied by the flourishing of affairs in every regard. However, even in this respect, developments are in the end man-made, since human sin or human piety leads to certain developments in nature, as Sozomenus confirms.

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[66] Socrat., *HE* 5 pr. 2–5. The biblical citation is 1. Tim. 5.24.

[67] See Leppin, *op. cit.*, 208ff.; mine is a minority position: cf. G.F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomenus, Theodoret, and Evagrius* (Paris, 1977), 194ff.; Urbainczyk, *op. cit.*, 86ff.; Wallraff, *op. cit.*, 283ff.; J. Szidat, "Friede in Kirche und Staat: Zum politischen Ideal des Kirchenhistorikers Sokrates", in B. Bäbler and H.-G. Nesselrath (eds.), *Die Welt des Sokrates von Konstantinopel: Studien zu Politik, Religion und Kultur im späten 4. und frühen 5. Jh. n. Chr. zu Ehren von Christoph Schäublin* (Munich and Leipzig, 2001), 1–14.

> About this period the dissensions by which the Church was agitated were followed, as is frequently the case, by disturbances and commotions in the state. The Huns crossed the Ister and devastated Thrace. The robbers in Isauria gathered in great numbers and ravaged cities and villages as far as Caria and Phoenicia.[68]

Therefore an apparent paradox emerges. Those historians who care most for God and God's intervention in history are the most prone to emphasize human responsibility, even in those cases where God intervenes with all His might, because the idea of fate is irrelevant to them, even if they use the word *týche* in some contexts where it is more or less a way of speaking. This personalised view of history is also a kind of theodicy. If history would be purely the work of God, the Church would have fared better, but human beings are fallible and the Devil is always involved in their affairs.

C. *Politics*

All the Church historians, not just Theodoretus, are forced to tell a rather depressing story. Christianity became the religion of the Roman emperors, but peace did not follow, not even peace within the Church, still less in politics. And turmoil in the Church is in their eyes indissolubly connected with turmoil in the secular world. Although called "Church" histories, all three works offer multifarious, often very detailed information about politics and therefore their accounts are also political in character. Socrates not unexpectedly is the only one to reflect on this problem:

> Before we begin the fifth book of our history, we must beg those who may peruse this treatise, not to censure us too hastily because having set out to write a Church history we still intermingle with ecclesiastical matters, such an account of the wars which took place during the period under consideration, as could be duly authenticated. For this we have done for several reasons: first, in order to lay before our readers an exact statement of facts; but secondly, in order that the minds of the readers might not become satiated with the repetition of the contentious disputes of bishops, and their insidious designs against one another; but more especially that it might be made apparent, that whenever the affairs of the state were disturbed, those of the Church, as if by some vital sympathy, became disordered also.[69]

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[68] Sozomen., *HE* 8.25.1.
[69] Socrat., *HE* 5, pr. 1–3.

Socrates gives three reasons for including political affairs in his Church history, the second of which seems to be somewhat ironic, as the bishops' quarrels are labelled boring. However, the first reason is pragmatic and convincing. The chronological frame of emperors was still more solid than that of the various (and often-contested) episcopal sees. The third one, which has been cited already, is part of Socrates' concept of history as already discussed.

Although they do not make it explicit, Sozomenus and Theodoretus must have had similar reasons for including political affairs in their Church histories. Nevertheless Socrates' apology demonstrates that there existed different, less political concepts of Church history at this time. Unfortunately, it is impossible to identify the circles in which such ideas circulated.

The political ideas of the "synoptical" Church historians can, to a certain degree, be distilled from their works. The legitimacy of those emperors who managed to gain power and to become generally acknowledged within the Empire, is never doubted. In this regard, there is no discrepancy between Christian and pagan authors. Although piety is applied as the paramount criterion for the evaluation of emperors, impiety, heretical belief or paganism do not invalidate an emperor's claim to political legitimacy, with just one exception. Theodoretus calls Julian the Apostate *týrannos*, that is usurper, several times.[70] However, even he sets out nowhere explicitly to contest Julian's legitimacy. Thus, the legitimist standpoint of the Church historians is clear.

The general evaluation of the emperors is the same among the three authors. There is a clear distinction between "good" and "bad" emperors,[71] which apparently had been established before the Church historians began writing, probably in the work of Gelasius of Caesarea. This evaluation obviously depends on each emperor's religious affiliation. Nicene (or seemingly Nicene) emperors are "good", the other ones "bad". The "good" emperors support the Church and individual Nicenes in every regard, for example by building churches; the "bad" ones fight against the adherents of true religion.

However, there are two discourses concerning the qualities of "good" and "bad" emperor in Sozomenus and, to a lesser extent,

[70] See, e.g. Theodoret. *HE* 3.11.1; 3.16.6; 3.28.3; 4.1.3.
[71] For details, see Leppin, *op. cit.*, 40ff.

in Socrates: a Christian one and a traditional one.[72] The latter one should not be labelled "pagan", for the reason that, even if it were indebted to concepts evolved in the pagan tradition, it presented itself as religiously neutral in order to be acceptable to the whole multireligious elite of the empire, in the same way as the panegyrical texts.

The most important quality of the "good" emperor in the Christian sense is his piety. He acts mercifully; his reign is filled with successes, even with military successes. All the other qualities depend on this, which does not make him a perfect man. Even a "good" emperor can be caught by a fit of rage and behave badly, but he will heed the reproaches of the holy man. One virtue which was very popular with Western authors is lacking in the Church histories: *humilitas/ tapeinótes*. Here, this quality is connected only with women.[73] The "bad" emperor is a heretic or, still worse, a pagan, who will act upon the council of evil people and who will not be likely to be revoked to a pious behaviour. He easily becomes angry and punishes his enemies cruelly. Misfortune will shape his reign.

The traditional discourse on the "good" emperor, as derived from the panegyrical tradition, is developed by Sozomenus in the panegyrical passages.[74] Here nothing unusual is to be found. The emperor possesses every Platonic virtue. *Philanthropía*, which had become the fundamental imperial virtue both in pagan and in Christian discourses during the fourth century, is also ascribed to the emperors in the Church histories.[75]

The judgements about individual emperors are easily summarised. Constantine, Jovian, Theodosius I and his sons[76] are regarded as orthodox and, therefore, "good"; Constantius and Valens as heretical and therefore "bad"; Julian is detested as a pagan and is therefore necessarily the "worst" emperor. However, the model is not entirely simple: Constantine cannot be regarded as a perfect emperor, because he made several mistakes, beginning with the banishment of Athanasius. Even Theodosius is not blameless. On the other hand, Constantius is pictured as a less "bad" emperor than Valens. His

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[72] Cf. Leppin, *op. cit.*, 160ff.
[73] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 164f.
[74] Sozomen., *HE, Ded.* and 9.1.6–8.
[75] Sozomen., *HE, Ded.* 3; 9.
[76] The evaluation of Theodosius' sons is a special case, because those emperors were contemporaries of the Church historians.

personal belief, for example, is considered sincere, and his efforts to propagate Christianity outside the Roman Empire are appreciated. Even the detestation of Julian varies in intensity.

Although the three Church historians are in agreement as to their general evaluation of the emperors, there remain many differences in detail, as has been shown in the case of Jovian. Whereas Socrates and Sozomenus, as loyal citizens from the capital Constantinople, follow the panegyrical tradition and praise Theodosius II, Theodoretus makes Jovian the ideal emperor, underlining that such an emperor should not live too long.

Those rulers whose influence was less felt in the East allow the authors still more freedom in evaluating their work. Thus, the Western, without doubt "good" emperor, Valentinian I is praised by the tolerant Church historians Socrates and Sozomenus for his tolerance (a quality which, indeed, he showed), whereas the rigorously orthodox Theodoretus paints him as a decidedly orthodox monarch.[77] Another example is Gallus, whom most ancient sources, pagan as well as Christian, judge a despotic emperor. This tradition has had a deep influence on Socrates and Sozomenus, whereas for Theodoretus Gallus is above all Julian's Christian antagonist and therefore a "good" emperor.[78]

A fundamental difference between the authors lies in their respective attitudes towards the priestly function of the emperors.[79] Socrates suggests that the emperor Theodosius II is also a true, that is to say mild, priest[80] and he shows him acting in this capacity on several occasions.[81] This position can be expected in an author with strong secular interests, who does not wholly recognise the unique dignity of clerics as people who were distinguished by consecration.

Sozomenus is fundamentally different. He distinguishes sharply between emperor and priest, whose honour has to be respected at least in holy places.[82] The emperor should restrain himself from intervening in Church affairs, in the manner of Valentinian I, an exemplary emperor.[83]

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[77] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 91ff.
[78] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 84f.
[79] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 194ff.
[80] Socrat., *HE* 7.42.1.
[81] Socrat., *HE* 7.22.16–18; 7.23.11f.
[82] Sozomen., *HE* 2.34.5f.
[83] Sozomen., *HE* 6.7.2.

Theodoretus emphasizes the distinction still more. The true priest possesses a special charisma, which has to be respected by the emperor. Again Valentinian I is depicted as an exemplary ruler. When he is asked by a synod to decide on the successor of Auxentius on the episcopal throne of Milan, Theodoretus makes him say: "The responsibility is too great for us. You who have been dignified with divine grace, and have received illumination from above, will make a better choice".[84]

It is symptomatic of their respective positions that Socrates does not mention Theodosius' act of penitence in front of Ambrose at Milan, although he must have known about this incident, whereas Sozomenus and Theodoretus go into it.[85] Theodoretus' conclusion is characteristic: "So both the archbishop and the emperor showed a mighty shining light of virtue. Both to me are admirable; the former for his brave words, the latter for his docility; the archbishop for the warmth of his zeal, and the prince for the purity of his faith".[86]

These divergent attitudes to the emperor's priestly role explain the differences in the accounts of the Council of Nicaea. If the emperor is the holder of certain priestly qualities, as Socrates contends, he should intervene in the debates. If, on the other hand, the emperor has to respect the wisdom of the bishops, as in Theodoretus, he has to keep silent and to implement what the bishops decide. Finally, Sozomenus, who is near to the court and sees the ceremonial importance of the demonstration of respect towards the emperor, nevertheless feels that decisions on dogma should be as free as possible from imperial intervention.

There is a consensus among all three authors on the general role of priests in political affairs. Priests are responsible for the well being of Christians and for the health of the True Faith. In this function they have to act as the emperor's counsellors. They enjoy the right to criticise the ruler and even feel that they are obliged to do so, because he, as a human being, is fallible. This duty is defined by the word *parrhesía*, frankness.[87] That attitude had been the property of philosophers, now it is transferred to clerics and monks. It is con-

[84] Theodoret., *HE* 4.7.1. As Valentinian I is an exemplary emperor this (without doubt unhistorical) utterance of his can be taken as if it were an authorial comment by Theodoretus.

[85] Sozomen., *HE* 7.25.1–7; Theodoret., *HE* 5.17–5.18.23.

[86] Theodoret., *HE* 5.18.23.

[87] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 189ff.

ceivable that Theodoretus is the most inclined of the three to extol this function of the priest. For him Ambrose becomes the embodiment of the true priest, but he also gives other examples which demonstrate that the frank conduct of priests can silence even dangerous enemies.[88]

In contrast to secular historians such as Ammianus, the Church historians have no interest in problems of taxation or administration. In Socrates alone are there detectable some elements of the senatorial perspective, when he highlights the pains endured by members of this order.[89] But these notices are of only marginal importance, because in his view the main problem of the Empire lies in religious division.

Military occurrences are not mentioned in their own right, but as symptoms of the moral quality of individual emperors. The defeat at Adrianople, for instance, proves that God hates Valens,[90] whereas the victory at the river Frigidus confirms that God protects Theodosius. Therefore, the choice of military events is selective, particularly in Theodoretus. The distinction between civil wars and external wars is not sharp in any of those authors. A triumph over a usurper is no less valuable than a victory against foreign enemies.

All the Church historians are loyal subjects of the Roman Empire, but their perspective is, with few exceptions, limited to the East. They have only a faint knowledge of Western geography. Typically, Socrates shifts the Frigidus, which is in the Julian Alps, to Gaul.[91] Therefore the sack of Rome 410, which impressed Latin authors such as Augustine and Jerome so intensely, is of minor importance to the Greek Church historians. Theodoretus does not even deem it worth mentioning. Socrates[92] and Sozomenus[93] do mention it, albeit from different perspectives. Socrates places his account of the sack of Rome between two chapters which refer to acts of violence by Bishops of Rome against Novatians. Thus he constructs a synchronism which, in his mode of thinking, also gives a reason for the events of 410 in the sense that the Bishops of Rome are responsible for

[88] Theodoret., *HE* 2.27.21; 2.32.5; 5.32.5–8.
[89] See, e.g. Socrat., *HE* 2.32.1; 6.6.9–11; 7.10.4.
[90] Socrat., *HE* 4.33; Sozomen., *HE* 6.37; Theodoret., *HE* 4.36.2–37, cf. 5.1.1.
[91] Socrat., *HE* 5.25.10.
[92] Socrat., *HE* 7.10.
[93] Sozomen., *HE* 9.8.

the sack of Rome, not the secular powers; this is without doubt a manifestation of Socrates' adherence to the court.

Sozomenus obviously wants to deal with pagan interpretations of the calamity. He shows that not even those pagans who tried to do it so were able to avert the catastrophe and that certain Christian sites and individuals were duly respected by the Christian Goths. In general, all the past sins of the Romans (i.e. the pagan Romans) are responsible for their final defeat—which is a remarkably distant way of judging Roman history. Besides, even for him, whose account is relatively detailed, the sack of Rome is no more than "a purely local problem".[94]

The Church historians do not discuss the circumstance that the frontiers of Christendom are not identical with the frontiers of the Roman Empire; nevertheless they do not take the identity for granted. Although they do not treat events in Persia or among the barbarians systematically,[95] they give heed to those of them which are important for the history of Christendom, and Sozomenus even justifies this by claiming that it is necessary to preserve the memory of the non-Roman heroes.[96] Therefore, the conversion of foreign nations is important,[97] but equally so is the suffering of Christian martyrs under Persians[98] or Goths.[99]

Their relative openness towards peoples beyond the imperial frontier does not make the Church historians cosmopolitans. There is no doubt that they are loyal subjects of the Roman Empire—that they want the Romans to be victorious against other nations. The Roman tradition is still very much alive.

All Church historians pay attention to the politics of their times. Socrates attaches unusual importance to the interests of secular politi-

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[94] Chesnut, *op. cit.*, 198.

[95] See also for this distinction F. Winkelmann, "Die Bewertung der Barbaren in den Werken der oströmischen Kirchenhistoriker", in E.K. Chrysos and A. Schwarcz (eds.), *Das Reich und die Barbaren* (Veröff. Inst. öst. Geschichtsforschung 29) (Vienna and Cologne, 1989), 221–235.

[96] Sozomen., *HE* 1.1.18f.

[97] See, e.g. Socrat., *HE* 1.19f.; Sozomen., *HE* 2.7; 2.24; Theodoret., *HE* 1.23–1.24.12; cf. B. Bäbler, "Der Blick über die Reichsgrenzen: Sokrates und die Bekehrung Georgiens", in B. Bäbler and H.-G. Nesselrath (eds.), *Die Welt des Sokrates von Konstantinopel. Studien zu Politik, Religion und Kultur im späten 4. und frühen 5. Jh. n. Chr. zu Ehren von Christoph Schäublin* (Munich and Leipzig, 2001), 159–181.

[98] See, e.g. Sozomen., *HE* 2.9–14; Theodoret., *HE* 5.39.

[99] See, e.g. Sozomen., *HE* 6.37.12–14.

cians.[100] His main concern is the unity of the Empire, which is indissolubly connected with the unity of the Church, which is in turn often disturbed by disputatious bishops. This does not mean religious indifference, but certainly a lack of concern with dogmatic questions. Obviously in Socrates' eyes, religion should work as a tool to unify society, in a way that *polis*-religion had been doing for centuries.

Therefore, Socrates is fond of tales which show all Christians united, as for example at the burial of the Novatian bishop Paul: "At his own funeral he united, in a certain sense, all the different sects into one Church. For all parties attended his body to the tomb, chanting psalms together, inasmuch as even during his lifetime by his rectitude he was in universal esteem by all".[101] Another event narrated by Socrates has a definite political accent and illustrates the correspondence of the Christian and of the political body:

> This event (*sc.* the miraculous victory over the usurper John in 425) afforded that most devout emperor an opportunity of giving a fresh demonstration of his piety towards God. For the news of the usurper's being destroyed, having arrived while he was engaged at the exhibition of the sports of the Hippodrome, he immediately said to the people: "Come now, if you please, let us leave these diversions, and proceed to the Church to offer thanksgivings to God, whose hand has overthrown the usurper." Thus did he address them; and the spectacles were immediately forsaken and neglected, the people all passing out of the circus singing praises together with him, as with one heart and one voice. And arriving at the Church, the whole city again became one congregation; and once in the Church they passed the remainder of the day in these devotional exercises.[102]

Because of his secular interests and his seeming devotion to Theodosius, Socrates has been interpreted virtually as a secular historian. For G. Zecchini he is a "storico ufficiale di fatto, e non di nome".[103] This position ignores Socrates' personal aloofness from the court. Moreover, certain deeds which were important for Theodosius II are completely ignored by Socrates, as for example the codification of the law. T. Urbainczyk calls Socrates a "historian of Church and

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[100] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 227ff.
[101] Socrat., *HE* 7.46.2f.
[102] Socrat., *HE* 7.23.11f.
[103] G. Zecchini, "S. Ambrogio e le origini del motivo della vittoria incruenta", *RSCI* 38 (1984), 391–404.

state".[104] Even this position seems to be too far reaching. The Church is always in the centre of Socrates' work; he is a historian of state only insofar as the fate of the state is indissolubly intertwined with the fate of the Church. If a decision between the interests of Church and state is necessary, Socrates prefers the former. It is remarkable that in the last chapter of his work he speaks approvingly of the fact that Thalassius, the praetorian prefect designate, has been ordained Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia.[105]

In Sozomenus[106] one thing is clear: he is a devotee of Pulcheria. As he is writing in the 440s, this means that he finds himself at a certain distance from imperial policy. He avoids praising Theodosius II as a kind of priest and, as he knew Socrates, this avoidance must be meaningful. His main concern seems to be personal holiness, which was the quality a powerless woman such as Pulcheria might exploit to establish a position at court. Conceivably, he shows significantly less sensitivity towards the needs of senators than Socrates.

Theodoretus, the provincial bishop (probably) in exile, has no secular concerns.[107] His main interest is to protect the independence of the Church from political pressure and to show that the priest has to be regarded higher than the king. A bishop who does not attach importance to the distinction between emperor and priest is not worth his title.[108] And as suffering is necessary for human beings, the aim of winning peace and prosperity does not appeal to him.

Although their positions towards imperial politics are by no means identical, none of the three Church historians can be used as a source for the official position of the Theodosian establishment. They show rather the diversity of political and ecclesiastical positions within orthodoxy. There was no clear development towards what is later on perceived as Byzantine Caesaropapism. The intellectual and political situation was open.

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[104] In the title of *op. cit.*; cf. Wallraff's rather harsh polemic against this position (*op. cit.*, 20).
[105] Socrat., *HE* 7.48.2–5.
[106] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 244ff.
[107] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 253ff.
[108] Theodoret., *HE* 5.18.24.

IV *The "synoptical" Church histories and the genre of Church history*

It is evident that the Church histories combine traditional and Christian elements. However, the Church historians do not justify their manner of writing history at length. Socrates is the most original in this regard.[109] Very important is the beginning of Book Five already cited. In this passage Socrates justifies the inclusion of seemingly secular matters by developing his theory of *sympátheia*. The second main area of Socrates' theoretical musings is his remarks on his simple style, to which he alludes several times[110] and most extensively in the proem to Book Six.[111] He regards his style, which is indeed clear but not refined, as an expression of Christian simplicity.

Theodoretus makes some general remarks in the first lines of his work.[112] He declares that he wants to preserve the memory of splendid deeds and of useful teachings. The reference to the teachings seems to be specific to the genre of Church history. It makes clear that Theodoretus does not set out to prove the true dogmas by history, but only to record them.

Sozomenus offers a long digression on his writing of history in the first chapter of his first book. He begins rather surprisingly with a sharp polemic against the Jews whose disbelief he thinks incurable. He compares them to the pagans who have been convinced by the words, and still more, by the deeds of Christian missionaries. These victories are as praiseworthy as the battle of Marathon. Church history is thus, very traditionally, justified by the importance of the theme. Then Sozomenus proceeds to explain his treatment of laws, documents and heretical writings. As regards the quarrelling of the bishops, which had already concerned Socrates, Sozomenus wants to hand it down to posterity because of his love for the truth and in order to show that the true dogma is triumphant in the end. Finally, he explains why he also includes events which happened

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[109] M. Mazza, "Sulla teoria della storiografia cristiana: Osservazioni su proemi degli storici ecclesiastici", in S. Calderone (ed.), *La storiografia ecclesiastica nella tarda antichità. Atti del convegno tenuto in Erice, 3–8 XII 1978* (Messina, 1980), 335–389; id., "Lo storico, la fede ed il principe. Sulla teoria della storiografia ecclesiastica in Socrate e Sozomeno", in id., *Le maschere del potere. Cultura e politica nella Tarda Antichità* (Naples, 1986), 255–318; I. Krivushin, "Socrates Scholasticus' Church History: Themes, Ideas, Heroes", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 23 (1996), 95–107.

[110] Socrat., *HE* 1.1.3; 3.1.3.

[111] Socrat., *HE* 6 pr. 2–5.

[112] Theodoret., *HE* 1.1.

among the Persians and the barbarians. This is a very full, if rather loose, exposition.

Somewhat different is the address to Theodosius II which inaugurates the whole work. This passage is chiefly devoted to a panegyric on the emperor. Sozomenus, having underlined the importance of literary patronage for the good ruler, beseeches the emperor to give him rewards similar to those that other writers had received from their sovereigns, and he names several pagan authors (including Homer, Plato or Theopompus), as if his writing were normal literature within a system of patronage. We shall return to this mixture of Christian and pagan perspectives typical of Sozomenus.

Historians of antiquity were likely to claim that they were telling the truth and nothing but the truth. This is also done by Socrates in a short polemic against Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*.[113] His claim seems to be honest, since he indeed rewrote his history after reading Athanasius, although his new thinking tarnished the image of Constantine, the first Christian emperor.[114] Less convincing to modern eyes is Socrates' assertion that he is not writing in eulogising words on Theodosius II in order to win the emperor's favour, but only because he wants to say what is true.[115] This seems to be contradicted by the panegyrical overtones of his text. But idealisation of the reigning emperor is acceptable within the contemporary discourse. Panegyrists do not shrink from underlining the truthfulness of their utterances, even though the public were fully aware of their constraints. It would therefore be unhistorical to condemn Socrates as a hypocrite.

Theodoretus makes no specific claim concerning his truthfulness and, typically enough, he is the most inclined to introduce stylisation into his work, as is evident in his narrative of Jovian's death or of the battle of Frigidus.

The Church historians do not directly consider their relationship to the genre of Church history, but some ideas are implicit in their writings. Church history was a new genre of prose literature in late antiquity, created by Eusebius.[116] It differed from secular history in two regards. There were no speeches and there were many docu-

[113] Socrat., *HE* 1.1.2f.
[114] Socrat., *HE* 2.1.
[115] Socrat., *HE* 7.21.10–22.1.
[116] See Winkelmann in this volume.

ments, which were reproduced *verbatim*. Thus, for a reader who is used to classicising prose, Eusebius sometimes creates the impression of having produced no more than a rough draft. This impression of roughness is not that surprising, if one remembers that Church History is not an exact translation of the Greek *ekklesiastikè historía*. A more precise rendering would be "history regarding Church matters". This concept could include many things; and the resulting work need not be a well-structured history in the classicising sense. Even mere collections of material could be termed ecclesiastical histories.[117]

The so-called synoptical Church historians depart in several ways from the Eusebian concept. Nevertheless the core theme remains the Church. Their idea of Church is, however, difficult to reconstruct.[118] One thing is clear. The Church is not an institution, which comprises only priests, bishops and synods, but includes also holy men and women, and necessarily the Christian or anti-Christian emperors who influenced the Church. As Socrates puts it:

> We have continually included the emperors in these historical details; because from the time they began to profess the Christian religion, the affairs of the Church have depended on them, so that even the greatest Synods have been, and still are convened by their appointment. Finally, we have particularly noticed the Arian heresy, because it has so greatly disquieted the Churches. Let these remarks be considered sufficient in the way of preface: we shall now proceed with our history.[119]

There existed another notion concerning the writing of the history of the Christian religion, the concept of *christianikè historía*, "history regarding Christian matters". The only known writer in this genre is Philippus of Side.[120] He was a deacon in Constantinople and had contacts with John Chrysostom. Having been ordained as a priest, he tried to become bishop three times: 426 against Sisinnius, 428 against Nestorius, 431 against Maximinus. His work is severely criticised by Socrates.[121] Although both, Socrates as well as Philippus,

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[117] Van Nuffelen op. cit., 128.
[118] See, as a good attempt for Socrates, Wallraff, *op. cit.*, 29ff.
[119] Socrat., *HE* 5 pr. 9f.
[120] E. Honigmann, "Philippus of Side and his 'Christian History'", id., *Patristic Studies* (Studi e testi 173) (Vatican City, 1953), 82–91; W. Portmann, "Philippus von Side", *Biogr.-bibliogr. Kirchenlexikon* 7 (1994), 510–512.
[121] Socrat., *HE* 7.27; Phot., *Bibl.* 35.

were Nicenes, they held opposing views in respect of Bishop Proclus of Constantinople (434–446), of whom Socrates thinks highly, whereas Philippus was opposed to him. It may be that Socrates began writing Church history in order to combat Philippus' Christian history.

The character of Philippus' work can be reconstructed only tentatively. The defeated rival of Proclus obviously intended to defend his position. His style was according to the hardly objective Socrates "Asianic", that is to say pompous. Anyway, the work, numbering 36 books each of several volumes, must have been extremely large. It included many polymathic digressions (as in the case of Philostorgius) and was chronologically inconsistent. Much remains unclear, particularly how Philippus handled Church history proper, but it is certain that this Christian history was very different from the known Church histories.

Eusebius' first successor was Gelasius of Caesarea, whose work is again difficult to reconstruct,[122] but of which we know enough to be sure that Gelasius considered himself to be a continuator of Eusebius. This is also the case with Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoretus. They are explicit followers of Eusebius,[123] and they stay within the general framework of his kind of writing. There are no long speeches and there are many documents quoted word for word.[124] Socrates and Theodoretus even include digressions of a theological character.[125] The reliability of the documents is high. For example, neither Socrates nor Theodoretus mention in their authorial comments on the Council of Nicaea that it was Constantine who introduced the concept of *homoousios* into the debates, but both of them quote Eusebius' letter affirming this, despite the fact that this does not suit their respective interpretations of Nicaea.[126]

On the other hand, all three of them are influenced by secular historiography, albeit to different degrees. They evidently take over certain stylistic features from classicising authors[127]—for example a

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[122] See F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen zur Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Caesarera* (Berlin, 1966).

[123] Socrat., *HE* 1.1.1; Sozomen., *HE* 1.1.12s.; Theodoret., *HE* 1.1.4.

[124] An extremely strange element is a dialogue between Constantius and Pope Liberius included in Theodoretus (*HE* 2.16.1–26), which the Church historian probably regarded as a kind of document.

[125] E.g. Socrat., *HE* 5.30–80; 6.13; Theodoret., *HE* 4.5.2; 5.39.24–26.

[126] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 57.

[127] T. Hidber, "Eine Geschichte von Aufruhr und Streit: Sokrates' Kirchengeschichte

narrative, which is more consistent than Eusebius's. They also accept the reigns of emperors as the main partitions of history, and they are akin to senatorial historians insofar as they distinguish between "good" and "bad" emperors.

Socrates seems to set himself against secular historiography, especially historiography written in an elevated style, as is illustrated by his defence of his own deliberately simple style. In several passages he also shows an aversion to the abuse of pagan education.[128] Acumen, which relies on dialectic, particularly of the Aristotelian kind, is one reason for the emergence of heresy.[129] The basis for polemics like this is his solid knowledge of classical culture.[130]

This does, of course, not mean that Socrates is completely free from pagan influence. He had been educated by pagans, and his Church history contains not only much secular material—which he is able to defend—but is also, which is more important, built around secular dates: emperors, consuls and even Olympic games are fundamental to his chronology. He lives in a context which is deeply imbued with pagan culture, and he cannot conceal this.

Theodoretus deeply abhors every form of paganism, but his writing style is elegant. Indeed all his five books are distinguished by an artful composition:[131] the central chapters have special significance and are carefully linked to other books. The importance of these chapters is evident in the following observations: the central chapter of Book One (17) documents a letter in which Constantine calls

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und die Tradition der Zeitgeschichtsschreibung", in Bäbler and Nesselrath (eds.), *Die Welt des Sokrates von Konstantinopel*, *op. cit.*, 44–59.

[128] See, e.g. Socrat., *HE* 2.35.6; 7.6.3f.; 7.22.8. Wallraff, *op. cit.*, 83ff. makes too much of Socrates' formation by pagan education. His style shows that *HE* has less regard for pagan culture than the Cappadocians (*contra* Wallraff, *op. cit.*, 89f., n. 299)—which does not mean complete disregard.

[129] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 173.

[130] Cf., with other accents, H.-G. Nesselrath, "Die Christen und die heidnische Bildung: Das Beispiel des Sokrates Scholastikos (hist. eccl. 3,16)", in J. Dummer and M. Vielberg (eds.), *Leitbilder der Spätantike: Eliten und Leitbilder. Altertumswiss. Koll. 1* (Stuttgart, 1999), 79–100, 97ff. for allusions to classical authors; see also C. Eucken, "Philosophie und Dialektik in der Kirchengeschichte des Sokrates", in B. Bäbler and H.-G. Nesselrath (eds.), *Die Welt des Sokrates von Konstantinopel. Studien zu Politik, Religion und Kultur im späten 4. und frühen 5. Jh. n. Chr. zu Ehren von Christoph Schäublin* (Munich and Leipzig, 2001), 96–110 (with some misunderstandings); T. Gelzer, "Zum Hintergrund der hohen Schätzung der paganen Bildung bei Sokrates von Konstantinopel", in Bäbler and Nesselrath (eds.), *Die Welt des Sokrates von Konstantinopel, op. cit.*, 111–124.

[131] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 287ff.

for the erection of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The central chapter of Book Five (21) contains Theodosius' I (non existent) order to destroy all pagan temples. In Books Two and Four heretical emperors dominate: Constantius II and Valens. In the central chapters they are shown clashing with courageous bishops.[132] In this Theodoretus shows himself to be a willing pupil of the rhetorical schools.

Sozomenus is by far the most influenced by secular historiography, as has already been shown by the panegyrical dedication and by the panegyrical beginning of Book Nine. His panegyrics are much more technical than Socrates's. Sozomenus informs his readers that he will paraphrase many documents,[133] which is also in keeping with the tradition of classicising historiography. Moreover, he unmistakably alludes to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* in the beginnings of his work.[134] His books are almost as artfully composed as Theodoretus's.[135]

He also makes explicit criticism of certain pagan interpretations, such as the allegation that Constantine converted to Christianity because no other religion was able to condone his sins.[136] In addition, he declares that pagans tried to avert Alaric's sack of Rome, but to no avail.[137] His work was obviously the most palatable to educated readers used to classicising historiography.

Eusebius defined as one of his main themes the fate of the Jews. This does not make much impact on the Church historians.[138] They mention the Jews in the context of Julian's failed plan to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, but their principal aim is thereby to illustrate God's wrath against Julian.[139] Socrates has a noteworthy concentration of anti-Jewish tales in Book Seven.[140] Sozomenus begins his first book with a reflection on the Jewish stubbornness in refusing to accept Jesus Christ as the Messiah; afterwards the theme recurs rarely, even though it is more prominent than in Socrates. Theodoretus

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[132] Theodoret., *HE* 2.16; 4.19.
[133] Sozomen., *HE* 1.1.14.
[134] Sozomen., *HE* 1.1.1 with Xen., Cyr. 1.1.1.
[135] Leppin, *op. cit.*, 183ff.
[136] Sozomen., *HE* 1.5.
[137] Sozomen., *HE* 9.6s.
[138] See Urbainczyk (1997a), 364ff.
[139] Socrat., *HE* 3.20; Sozomen., *HE* 5.22; Theodoret., *HE* 3.20.
[140] Socrat., *HE* 7.4; 7.16; 7.17; 7.38.

makes several anti-Jewish comments,[141] but the Jews are not very important to him. The topic seems to have lost its importance in Church historiography.

To conclude, it is evident that all three Church historians treated here consider themselves to be true followers of Eusebius, and rightly so. Nevertheless, a plain tendency to the convergence of Church history and pagan history is palpable in all of them, particularly in Sozomenus. This will be taken to its fullest extent by later authors such as Theophylactus Simocatta (7th century). But even in this case our main point remains valid: For all that they have in common, the three so-called "synoptical" Church historians are individual authors with divergent views, whose works illustrate the intellectual richness of the Theodosian age.

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[141] Theodoret., *HE* 1.9.14; 3.20.8.

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PART TWO

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CHURCH HISTORIANS (II): PHILOSTORGIUS AND GELASIUS OF CYZICUS

Gabriele Marasco

I. *Philostorgius and Arian Historiography*

The wide growth of orthodox ecclesiastical historiography in the last decades of the IVth and the beginning of the Vth century was caused mainly by the need for a polemic against heresies, particularly Arianism, which imposed a new reflection on the condition of the Church and the Christian Empire after the victory against paganism, achieved during the reign of Constantine.

The same situation likewise stimulated a growth of Arian historiography, which sought to understand the facts of that period, naturally reflecting the Arians' polemic against the orthodox. Due to the defeat of Arianism, most of these writings were lost and it is very difficult to establish which of the accounts that orthodox authors attribute to anonymous Arian sources come from historiographical writings and which reflect oral traditions. Arian historiography seems to have developed in the IVth century. In particular, the inclination to Arianism in some parts of the *Chronicon Paschale*,[1] in Theophanes' work and in some Syrian chronicles leads one to suppose the existence of a common source—an Arian historian who was a member of Eudoxius' and Euzoius' party, and who dealt with the facts from Constantine's to Valens' death.[2] The brevity of the extant fragments, which are mostly about chronology or events not much different from the rest of the tradition, makes it difficult to distinguish the characteristics of this historian, who can be considered perhaps a predecessor and one of the possible sources of the only Arian historian

[1] See particularly P. Battifol, "Un historiographe anonyme arien du IV^{e} siècle", *Römische Quartalschrift* 9 (1895), 57–97.

[2] See particularly the analysis of the problem and the collection of the fragments by J. Bidez (*Philostorgius. Kirchengeschichte*, 3. bearb. Aufl. von F. Winkelmann [Berlin, 1981], CLI–CLXIII and 202–241).

who is known for certain and whose writings were very important for the later tradition—Philostorgius.

We know Philostorgius' writings especially thanks to the interest that they excited in patriarch Photius: he briefly wrote about them in his *Bibliotheca* (cod. 40), and composed a long epitome which gives us the main structure of Philostorgius' *Ecclesiastical History* and which contains some large fragments from his work. Other parts of Philostorgius' narrations have been handed down to us thanks to an anonymous *Vita Constantini*[3] and the *Passio Artemii*,[4] a hagiographic writing which has generally been attributed to John of Rhodes, but which seems to have been written by John of Damascus, who flourished during the first half of the VIIIth century.[5] With the help of these and other sources which refer to Philostorgius and demonstrate his great impact during the Byzantine Age (particularly Sudas, Nicetas Choniates and Nicephorus Callistus), J. Bidez was able to make a very good reconstruction of Philostorgius' writings, which gives us the possibility, despite the unavoidable gaps, of evaluating his characteristics, his historiographic orientation and his place in the culture of his age. Nevertheless, Philostorgius' writings are not very popular among modern scholars, particularly among ancient historians: so, the analysis of this work, compared to the rest of the pagan and Christian traditions, is very important, because, using it, we can discover the method and the orientation of a historian who is very different from the others we know.

Philostorgius was born in Borissus, in *Cappadocia secunda*, in ca. 368; his family ascribed to the most radical form of Arianism, following Eunomius' teachings.[6] After his transfer to Constantinople, at the age of 20 he met Eunomius, who had been exiled by Theodosius I and was living in Dacoras.[7] This meeting strengthened Philostorgius' faith,

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[3] H.G. Opitz, "Die Vita Constantini des Codex Angelicus 22", *Byzantion* 9 (1934), 535–93; P. Heseler and J. Bidez, *Byzantion* 10 (1935), 399–442. For a list of the following editions of the manuscripts of this biography, cf. Bidez and Winkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 345.

[4] Critical edition by B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, V (Berlin-New York, 1988), 185–245; English translation by M. Vermes, with introduction and notes by S. Lieu, in: S.N.C. Lieu and D. Monserrat (eds.), *From Constantine to Julian: Pagan and Byzantine Views. A Source History* (London-New York, 1996), 224–62.

[5] See Kotter, op. cit., 185–87; T.D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), 8.

[6] Philostorg. *HE* 9, 9.

[7] Philostorg. *HE* 10, 6.

a very important element in his literary writings; he composed an *Ecclesiastical History*, and a lost eulogy of Eunomius.[8] He was involved in the polemic against pagans, and wrote a book against Porphyry.[9]

His *Ecclesiastical History* dealt with the period from the beginning of Arius' heresy to the accession to the throne of Valentinian III in 425. This *History* was composed in twelve books, and the first letter of each of them was one of his name. This use of an acrostic reveals Philostorgius' literary taste and culture, which characterizes all his writings.[10]

Philostorgius' *HE* was composed during the decade 430–440,[11] before Socrates' and Sozomenus' ecclesiastical histories and certainly before that of Theodoretus.[12] This work was very polemical: it was composed to defend Arianism, particularly Aetius and Eunomius and their teachings and politics. According to Photius, Philostorgius composed a heretical eulogy and an accusation against the orthodox rather than a history.[13] In my view, however, analysis of Philostorgius' fragments and comparison with the parallel narratives in the orthodox tradition make us attenuate Philostorgius' intention to break with the ecclesiastical historiographic tradition: he used the same sources, methods and historiographic orientations as the orthodox, whom he knew and replied to; and he departed from them only because of his Arian faith.

The date of the beginning of Philostorgius' work, indeed, can be linked to the ending of Eusebius' *HE* and indicates that he considered himself one who carried on Eusebius' writings, like orthodox historians. At first, Philostorgius wrote about the authorship of the books of the Maccabees, thinking as Eusebius did that the Fourth book was written by Flavius Iosephus.[14] He appreciated Eusebius as a historian, remembering that he narrated the events up to the succession

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[8] Philostorg. *HE* 3, 21.

[9] Philostorg. *HE* 10, 10.

[10] I want to analyze this topic in another place, as well as other aspects of Philostorgius' writings and method: this study is limited to the historiographical and political aspects, in accordance with the scope of this book.

[11] On the chronology see particularly Bidez (*Philostorgius*, CXXXII), who dated the composition of the work before 433, but with feeble arguments; G. Zecchini ("Filostorgio", in: A. Garzya (ed.), *Metodologie della ricerca sulla Tarda Antichità. Atti del Primo Convegno dell'Associazione di Studi Tardoantichi* [Napoli, 1989], 598) dates it at the end of the same decade.

[12] See particularly Bidez, *Philostorgius*, CXXXIII.

[13] Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 40, 8a, 35–37 (= Bidez, *Philostorgius*, 4, 11–12).

[14] Philostorg. *HE* 1, 1; cf. Euseb. *HE* 3, 10, 6.

of Constantine's sons;[15] but he did not appreciate his position on Christian doctrine. This condemnation is an expression of Philostorgius' radical Arianism, particularly if we consider that he included Eusebius in the number of the bishops who were in favour of Arius' theses at the Council of Nicaea.[16]

Philostorgius' tendentiousness becomes evident when he starts to write about the beginning of the heresy. He tells us that Arius, who was leading in the election for the bishop of Alexandria, favoured Alexander, giving him his votes and determining his election. This account is possible, but not verifiable,[17] and can underline Arius' lack of interest in power. Philostorgius' next affirmation (*HE* 1, 4) is even more significant: according to that the presbyter Baucalis was responsible for the beginning of the clash between Arius and Alexander. This account is not only wrong, because Baucalis was the name of the Alexandrine church whose Arius was put at the head, but also tendentious, because this invention has the function of attributing to a third person the responsibility of that clash, which had great consequences for the Church.

The complex links between Philostorgius and the orthodox tradition become evident in the evaluation of the reign of Constantine, who was the founder of the Christian Empire and one of the defenders of the faith, but also the guarantor of the Council of Nicaea, which condemned Arius. Constantine was essential for Philostorgius' polemic and his evaluation is significant for understanding the method and the conclusions of this Arian historian.

Philostorgius agrees with the orthodox tradition about the reign of Constantius Chlorus and about Constantine's conversion (*HE* 1, 5–6), but disagrees, telling a very particular story, about the killing of Crispus and Fausta, Constantine's son and wife, after the Council of Nicaea. According to Philostorgius, Fausta, who fell in love with Crispus but wasn't requited, said that he had tried to seduce her, like Phaidras did with Hippolytus in the tragedy; Constantine, like Theseus, put Crispus to death. Then, he realised his mistake and executed Fausta, who had committed adultery with a *cursor*. Not very

[15] The link is not only with HE, but also with *Vita Constantini*.
[16] Philostorg. *HE* 1, 6a.
[17] Philostorg. *HE* 1, 3; cf. M. Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo* (Rome, 1975), 27.

long afterwards, Constantine was poisoned by his brothers, thus receiving punishment for killing his son.[18]

This story borrows themes from pagan tradition, but develops them in a very particular way, using models from tragedy;[19] in my view, it reflects Philostorgius' polemical exigencies.[20] The story served to exclude the responsibility of Helena, Constantine's mother, who favoured Arius, was sympathetic to his partisans and distinguished herself by her veneration of Lucian of Antioch, the martyr and Arius' teacher.[21] The entire responsibility for these events was attributed to Fausta, the daughter of the pagan persecutor Maximianus, while Crispus, Lactantius' disciple and promoter of laws in favour of the Christians,[22] appeared as the victim of a false accusation. At the end, Philostorgius showed Constantine as being dominated by his wife's intrigues and unable to see the truth; and so the historian suggested that he was lacking in understanding. This explained his yielding to the pressures and accusations of Arius' enemies during the Council of Nicaea.

Through his account of Constantine's death, Philostorgius' narrative is very different from the orthodox and pagan traditions: the emperor was poisoned by his brothers as a punishment for killing Crispus. When Constantine understood everything, he had himself baptized by the Arian bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia and gave him his testament, in which he asked the first son to arrive to punish his brothers. Eusebius hid the testament and gave it to Constantius, who killed the guilty ones.[23]

The account of Constantine's murder by his brothers comes from Constantius' propaganda, who wanted to justify the killing of his uncles;[24] the orthodox tradition[25] was also aware of the story of Constantine's testament, but accused Eusebius of having influenced

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[18] Philostorg. *HE* 1, 4, 4a, 4b.

[19] See G. Marasco, "Costantino e le uccisioni di Crispo e Fausta (326 d.C.)", *Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica* 121 (1993), 307–9.

[20] Marasco, art. cit., 309–11.

[21] Cf. Philostorg. *HE* 2, 12; *Chron. Pasch.* I 527, 9–13.

[22] Hieron. *de vir. ill.* 80; Sozomen. *HE* 1, 5, 2 (cf. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 2, 4).

[23] Philostorg. *HE* 2, 16. About the tradition concerning the Arian baptism of Constantine see G. Fowden, "The Last Days of Constantine. Oppositional Versions and their Influence", *JRS* 84 (1994), 153ff.

[24] See particularly X. Lucien-Brun, "Constance II et le massacre des princes", *Bulletin de l'Association G. Budé* 32 (1973), 587–89.

[25] Cf. Rufin. *HE* 1, 12; Socrat. *HE* 1, 39, 3–4; Sozomen. *HE* 2, 34, 2; Theodoret. *HE* 2, 3, 5.

Constantius against Athanasius, giving him the testament in which Constantine designated him as his heir.[26] Philostorgius extended the story not only by giving the particulars of Constantine's Arian baptism, but also by modifying Eusebius' role in the testament transmission, which justified Constantius' actions as his father's avenger. According to Philostorgius, Constantine's testament did not contain instructions for Constantius' succession in the East, but only the order to persecute the guilty brothers; so, he implicitly denied the orthodox accusations against Eusebius and defended the spontaneity of the new emperor's Arian choice.

The great admiration of Philostorgius for Constantius II, the emperor propitious to the Arians, can be understood through the narration of his reign and breaks with the critical orthodox and pagan narratives, the first of them being by Ammianus Marcellinus. But Philostorgius' liking is not absolute, and the description of Constantius' personality and reign reveals light and shade and also a distinct evolution. Philostorgius commended Constantius for his personal virtues and particular devotion, as proven by the construction of the S. Sofia church and the translation to Constantinople of the apostles Andreas' and Timotheus' relics (*HE* 3, 2–2a). He described Constantius' initiatives to propagate the Arian faith by embassies to the Homerites and gifts to their king, not only to make him his friend, but also to convert him and his people. Philostorgius (*HE* 3, 4–6) also especially recalled the action of Theophilus the Indian, helped by Constantius in his missionary action, and his successes with the Homerites and the Axumites. The long story of the Arian missionary activity in the Red Sea area was intended to repudiate and obscure the orthodox tradition, which, since Rufinus, exalted Frumentius' action, who converted Axumites and was designated as bishop by Athanasius.[27] In my opinion it is very significant that the story of this missionary activity follows, in Photius' epitome, the account of Athanasius' renewed exile by Constantius: Philostorgius intended to stress the emperor's engagement in the affirmation of the Arian faith.

Philostorgius' strong partiality in the events where politics and faith were mixed is confirmed by the next account (*HE* 3, 12), which

[26] Cf. Rufin. loc. cit.; Theodoret. loc. cit.

[27] Cf. Rufin. *HE* 1, 10–11; Socrat. *HE* 1, 18, 4–14; Sozomen. *HE* 2, 24, 5–11; *Synax. ethiop.*, PO, VII 3, pp. 411–13.

relates that Athanasius, through corruption, ingratiated himself with Constans' officers, particularly the *comes privatarum* Eustathius, in order to get a letter recalling him to Alexandria from Constantius.

So, Constantius' reign is considered the most fertile period for the development and diffusion of Arianism; during this period the founders of radical Arianism, Aetius and Eunomius, started their activity, and Philostorgius (*HE* 3, 14–21) describes in a very laudatory way their personalities and first successes. The historian also underlines Constantius' clemency to the usurper Vetranion, in accordance with both the pagan and the orthodox traditions;[28] and, in accordance with the orthodox tradition, he recalls the apparition of the Cross in Jerusalem, which announced the victory of the true emperor over the usurper Magnentius.[29]

The evaluation of Constantius' reign evolved considerably after Gallus' disaster: Philostorgius gives us a very interesting version, completely different from those of the orthodox historians and that of the pagan Ammianus. According to Philostorgius, the disaster was caused by slanderers, who made Constantius averse to Gallus. Constantius sent him the praetorian prefect Domitianus and, later on, Montius; they were offensive to Gallus, who killed them. Then Constantius called Gallus, who, frightened by the threat of civil war, went into exile on an island. The eunuch Eusebius made Constantius much more angry with Gallus, obtained his sentence to death and sent some men to kill him. Constantius meanwhile repented and sent men to interrupt the execution, but Eusebius stopped them until after Gallus' death.[30]

This story is very different from the orthodox version, which recounts that Gallus was punished because he conspired against Constantius and had killed Domitianus and quaestor Magnus (an error for Montius), and thus revealed his desire for absolute power.[31] Completely different also is the pagan Eunapius' story, known through Zosimus: he considered Gallus' death as one of the results of Constantine's cruelty against his relatives and caused by the calumnies of the courtiers, who told him that Gallus was plotting; furthermore

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[28] Philostorg. *HE* 3, 22; cf. Socrat. *HE* 2, 28, 18–20; Sozomen. *HE* 4, 4, 3; Zosim. 2, 44, 5.

[29] Philostorg. *HE* 3, 26; cf. Socrat. *HE* 2, 28, 22; Sozomen. *HE* 4, 5; Cyrill. *epist. ad Constant.*, PG XXXIII 1165–66.

[30] Philostorg. *HE* 3, 28; 4, 1.

[31] Socrat. *HE* 2, 34; Sozomen. *HE* 4, 7, 6–7.

in Eunapius' account there are three personages, who are different from Philostorgius' ones.[32] More complicated is the link with Ammianus' narrative, which underlines the responsibilities of Gallus and suggests that he was guilty of cruelty, and which describes Domitianus' responsibilities in the same way as Philostorgius, but defends Montius' actions, considering him a prudent man and a victim of Gallus' cruelty. Ammianus describes Constantius' pressure on the dignitaries who were hostile to Gallus, such as Eusebius, and recounts that Gallus really wanted absolute power, but was afraid and was persuaded to obey Constantius' invitation by a trick. When he was arrested, he defended himself by accusing his dead wife, Constantius' sister: Constantius became angry and killed him.[33]

Some elements of Philostorgius' story are very similar to that of Ammianus, in particular concerning Domitianus' and Eusebius' responsibilities, but it is different in two main points, which make it very distinct from both the pagan and the orthodox traditions:[34] on the one hand, there is the defence of Gallus, described as an innocent victim of the courtiers' calumnies and of the dignitaries' arrogance and so worried about the public interest that he was prepared to lay down his life to avoid a civil war; on the other hand, there is the account of the repentance of Constantius, who sent men in order to save Gallus. These partisan accounts must in my view be understood only as taking into consideration Gallus' behaviour towards Eunomius' faction.

Philostorgius relates that Gallus condemned Aetius for calumnies, but later on saved him, accepted him in the court and ordered him to convert his brother Julian from paganism. When Gallus went to the West, Theophilus the Indian went with him and tried to pacify him and Constantius, until he was condemned to exile. Then, after Gallus' death, Aetius, Eudoxius and Eunomius were accused of having taken part in his conspiracy and were in turn condemned to exile.[35]

The relationships with Eunomius and the other members of his faction, their engagement with Gallus and the exile that they suffered for their behaviour are elements which explain Philostorgius' great

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[32] Zosim. 2, 55, 2–3.

[33] Amm. Marc. 14, 7; 14, 11.

[34] Except, as it could be, the short link in *Chronicon Paschale* (I 541 = Bidez, *Philostorgius*, p. 223).

[35] Philostorg. *HE* 3, 27; 4, 1; 4, 8.

admiration for Gallus and his concern to defend his memory. The account of Constantius' change of heart and of the sending of more men to save Gallus is, in my opinion, an invention: it is reminiscent of the later repentance of Theodosius, who, after the massacre of Thessalonica, promulgated a law that delayed all executions by 30 days, to give time to the emperor to reflect and to calm down.[36] It is evident that Philostorgius wanted to play down Constantius' responsibility. But Gallus' death was impossible to erase, and had great consequences for Constantius' following reign, such that Philostorgius' judgement was not completely positive. This was also in view of the new emperor's attitude, which was hostile to the Eunomians, of Aetius' fresh condemnation to exile by the Synod of Constantinople in 360, and of the embitterment of the laws against him and his followers.[37]

According to Philostorgius (*HE* 5, 4) Constantius always used to win against his enemies; but, when he killed his relatives and exiled Aetius and Theophilus—trusting in their enemies' calumnies—he lost the war against the Persians. The killing of the relatives is not linked here with the massacre of Constantine's brothers,[38] justified by Philostorgius as a punishment for the murderers' guilt, but to the killing of Gallus. Philostorgius' evaluations of Constantius' and Constantine's reigns are indeed very similar and this similarity is confirmed by the account according to which Constantius, while he was dying, was baptized by an Arian bishop, Euzoius, who was close to the Eunomian faith.[39] Philostorgius then follows a familiar scheme: he positively describes the personality and the behaviour of the emperor who was propitious to Arians, but condemns his actions against Eunomius' faction as an error caused by calumnies, which were so strong as to persuade the emperor also to kill his own innocent relatives.

Nevertheless, the evaluation of Constantius' reign as a whole is very positive and is confirmed by an account which relates that, when the emperor suddenly died, he was organizing a second council

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[36] *Cod. Theod.* 9, 40, 13; Rufin. *HE* 2, 18; Sozomen. *HE* 7, 24, 7; Theodoret. *HE* 5, 18, 16–18; Zonar. 13, 18, 14–15.

[37] Philostorg. *HE* 4, 12; 5, 2; about Constantius' behaviour towards Aetius during this period, see Simonetti, op. cit., 334ff.; R. Klein, *Constantius II. und die christliche Kirche* (Darmstadt, 1977), 96ff.

[38] As Bidez thinks (ad loc.), with reference to Iulian, *epist. ad Athen*, 271a.

[39] Philostorg. *HE* 6, 5.

in Nicaea, probably to bring to completion the victory of Arianism.[40] This account, not confirmed by the rest of the tradition, has been generally neglected;[41] but it may be a duplication of Constantius' attempts to set up a council in Nicaea in 358 and again in 359, after the earthquake which destroyed Nicomedia; these attempts failed because of the opposition caused by the choice of place, which was too connected with the first council of Nicaea.[42] Philostorgius' version thus gives to Constantius' reign a dramatic conclusion, which makes evident the regret for a failed chance to defeat the orthodox.

The discrepancies with the orthodox tradition with regard to Julian's reign are very small. Philostorgius agrees with his enemies in condemning the politics of the Apostate, which had hit all the Christians:[43] he emphasises the violence of the persecution, which had brought about murder, torture and the destruction of relics; and he also emphasises the perfidy of the emperor, which had improved the crashes among Christians calling back the exiled bishops.[44] But there are elements very similar with the orthodox tradition, such as praise for the faith of *comes* Valentinian, the next Christian emperor[45] and, as Photius had related, the story about Julian's behaviour in Daphne and towards the martyr Babylas' relics.[46]

The tale of the prodigies which had stopped the reconstruction of the temple of Jerusalem[47] was very similar, and very detailed. Furthermore Philostorgius was near to the orthodox tradition[48] in his interpretation of the death of some of Julian's collaborators in the action against Christians as divine punishment. Apostates Heron's and Theotecnus' punishment (*HE* 7, 13), which resembles the theme

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[40] Philostorg. *HE* 6, 5; 6, 5a (= *Pass. Art.* 20).

[41] See anyway H.C. Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer* (Tübingen, 1988), 83, n. 114.

[42] Philostorg. *HE* 4, 11; Socrat. *HE* 2, 39, 3; Sozomen. *HE* 4, 16, 1 and 15–18; Theodoret. *HE* 2, 26, 1–3.

[43] See, e.g., Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 582; R.J. Penella, "Julian the Persecutor in Fifth Century Church Historians", *The Ancient World* 24 (1993), 33ff. About the Arian and orthodox tradition concerning Julian's persecution and the Arian martyrs, see particularly Brennecke, op. cit., 87ff.

[44] Philostorg. *HE* 7, 1; 7, 4.

[45] Philostorg. *HE* 7, 7; cf. Socrat. *HE* 4, 1, 8–9; Sozomen. *HE* 6, 6, 3–6; Theodoret. *HE* 3, 16, 1–5.

[46] Philostorg. *HE* 7, 8.

[47] Philostorg. *HE* 7, 9 and 14.

[48] Philostorg. *HE* 7, 10; cf. Theodoret. *HE* 3, 12, 2ff. Ammianus (23, 1, 5) considered them as a warning of Julian's death.

of divine justice as it had appealed to Lactantius, seems to find links only in the Arian tradition.[49] Julian's demise—a divine punishment proving the superiority of Christ over the pagan gods—is narrated as in all the Christian tradition; the account which tells that he was buried by Merobaudes in Cilicia, by chance in front of Maximinus' sepulchre (*HE* 8, 1), underlines the similarities of the two persecutors.[50]

Neither is the element which particularly characterizes Philostorgius' story about Julian's reign—Artemius' martyrdom—completely extraneous to the orthodox tradition. We do not find this story in Photius' epitome and it is only confirmed by the *Passio Artemii*: but it is difficult to define through this writing the development and the importance of the episode in Philostorgius, because it is evident that the hagiographer developed his narrative[51] by including in the dialogue between Artemius and Julian topics and episodes narrated by Philostorgius as happening on very different occasions. The thesis that Philostorgius exalted Artemius' sacrifice because he was an Arian is moreover very doubtful: in fact, nothing proves the Arian faith of Artemius, who was condemned, it seems to me, for his actions against pagans, following Constantius II's policy, when he was *dux Aegypti*:[52] he is also exalted by the orthodox Theodoretus as a martyr who had been killed for this reason.[53] Philostorgius' polemic was not against the orthodox, but against the pagans, who, as in Ammianus Marcellinus' account, considered Artemius not as a martyr, but as a man justly condemned for his guilt, after the Alexandrians' accusations.[54]

Nevertheless the need to enjoin against Julian's policies did not

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[49] They are mentioned often only in *Chron. Pasch.* I 548–49; Theophan., *chron.*, 50 de Boor (= Bidez, *Philostorgius*, 232–33).

[50] Philostorgius' testimony is isolated also for the role attributed to Merobaudes: according to Ammianus (25, 9, 12–13), Julian's body was buried by Procopius, while according to Zosimus (3, 34, 3–4) and Zonaras (13, 13, 23–24) he was accompanied to Tarsus by the entire army.

[51] On the relationship between the tale of the agiographer and that of Philostorgius, see generally Bidez, *Philostorgius*, LVIII–LXI.

[52] See G. Marasco, "L'imperatore Giuliano e l'esecuzione di Fl. Artemio, *dux Aegypti*", *Prometheus* 23 (1997), 59–78.

[53] Theodoret. *HE* 3, 8, 1. Cedrenus (I 537) and Theophanes (*chron.*, p. 51) comes from Theodoretus, not from Philostorgius (as Bidez, e.g., supposes; cf. *Philostorgius*, CLII, 176 and 234; cf. also Brennecke, op. cit., 127–29); this is proved by the verbal coincidences (see Marasco, *L'imperatore Giuliano . . .*, 78 and n. 111).

[54] Amm. Marc. 22, 11, 2: *Tunc et Artemius, ex duce Aegypti, Alexandrinis urgentibus atrocium criminum mole, supplicio capitali multatus est.* This interpretation was substained by Julian (*epist.* 60 Bidez; cf. Marasco, op. cit., 66–7).

persuade Philostorgius to depart completely from the polemic against the orthodox, as is proved by the story of the killing of the Alexandrian Arian bishop George at the end of 361, during a civil insurrection.[55] Philostorgius (*HE* 7, 2) narrated that George was so near to Aetius' teachings that he ordered Arians to read his writings: he was killed by the pagan mob, but the action was organized by Athanasius, who so retrieved his dignity as bishop.

The story is linked to views propagated by Athanasius' enemies, confirmed by Socrates, who engages in controversy about it and transcribes a letter in which Julian attributed to the pagans the responsibility for George's killing and justified their action by the crimes perpetrated by the bishop.[56] Ammianus (22, 11, 3–11) also attributed the responsibility of the murder to the pagans, claiming they were angry at George's behaviour, and that the Christians didn't defend him, because they were moved by hate. Philostorgius' version is therefore isolated, in conflict with orthodox and pagan sources, desperately defending a man who, with his violent behaviour, attracted the hostility of everybody but the Arians, only to accuse Athanasius.

After Julian's death, Philostorgius' polemic against the pagans is secondary, and he comes back to the polemic against the orthodox, which influences his evaluation of the emperors. So, Jovian's measures for the restitution to the Christians of the churches and the recalling of Valentinian have Philostorgius' agreement (*HE* 8, 5); Jovian's short reign is not judged at all, mainly owing to the neutrality of the emperor who, influenced by the anomoean bishops Candidus and Arrianus against Athanasius, didn't take up any particular stance.[57]

The account describing the pagan Hypatia's death is very important. She was killed in Alexandria in 415 by superstitious Christians, suspicious about her astronomical knowledge.[58] Philostorgius exalted

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[55] About these events and the related tradition, see M. Caltabiano, "L'assassinio di Giorgio di Cappadocia (Alessandria, 361 d.C.)", *Quaderni Catanesi di Studi Classici e Medievali* 7 (1985), 17–59.

[56] Socrat. *HE* 3, 3, 4–25 (Julian, *epist.* 60 Bidez); cf. Sozomen. *HE* 5, 7, 8–9; 4, 30, 2; Epiphan. *Panar. haer.* 76, 1, 8; Greg. Naz. *Or.* 21, 26–27; Niceph. Call. *HE* 10, 7.

[57] Philostorg. *HE* 8, 6; in the same way, about a subsequent tentative attempt of the Omeousians to obtain Jovianus' approvation, cf. Socrat. *HE* 3, 25, 2–5; Sozomen. *HE* 6, 4. On Jovian's religious politics see, for instance, Brennecke, op. cit., 164–69.

[58] See M. Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria*, Engl. transl. (Harvard, 1995); G. Beretta, *Ipazia d'Alessandria* (Roma, 1993).

her great culture, describing it as greater than that of her father and teacher, the rhetorician Theon, and giving an account of the horrible way in which the woman was killed by the orthodox; the historian probably refers to bishop Cyrillus' responsibility, as in the parallel account in Sudas.[59] Socrates confirms the dissemination of this account, but defends Cyrillus and the orthodox and accuses the Egyptian prefect Orestes, bishop's enemy.[60] So, Philostorgius used a polemical topic against the orthodox: his approval of the pagan Hypatia, therefore, was probably not only a polemical expedient, but also a consequence of the woman's science and culture, which was admired by the historian, being very attracted by the glamour of pagan culture.

The polemic against the orthodox becomes very important again with the rise to the Eastern throne of Valens, the last emperor who favoured Arianism. It was very difficult to defend this emperor, because his name was closely linked to the disaster at Adrianople, which was generally considered the beginning of the decline of the Empire. Various interpretations of that defeat were made by the orthodox: according to them it was the consequence of God's anger for Valens' impiety about the true faith.[61] According to the pagans, on the contrary, it was a consequence of the gods' hostility towards the Christian Empire.[62] Ammianus emphasised the responsibility of Valens, of his ministers and of his generals, for their political and military mistakes in their relationships with the Goths and in the war;[63] he painted a very negative portrait of Valens, accusing him of avidity, cruelty, lack of respect for the law, and laziness.[64]

Philostorgius' position is very different: he defends Valens' military action, relating that he retired only because he was obliged to, after losing many men; he also claims that he was killed fortuitously

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[59] Philostorg. *HE* 8, 9; 9a (= Sud., s.v. *Hypatia*, Adler IV, 645). About Hypatia's death and Cyrillus' responsibility, see Dzielska, op. cit., 90ff., with sources and bibliography.

[60] Socrat. *HE* 7, 15. In the tale by John of Nikiu (*chron.* 84–87, pp. 100–102 Charles) Hypatia is considered guilty of sorcery, and so rightly killed, according to God's desire.

[61] Rufin. *HE* 11, 13; Sozomen. *HE* 6, 40; Theodoret. *HE* 4, 32–36.

[62] Eunap. *V. soph.* 7, 4, 3–5; cf. Zosim. 4, 21.

[63] Amm. Marc. 31, 5–13; cf. Zosim. 4, 22–24. About the discussion concerning Adrianople's causes see J. Straub, *Regeneratio Imperii* (Darmstadt, 1972), 195–219.

[64] Amm. Marc. 31, 14, 5–7.

and that his nephew Gratian was very sorry for his death.[65] This affirmation, very doubtful in view of Gratian's orthodox faith, is openly contradicted by Zosimus (4, 24, 4); but, in my opinion, the most important thing is the big difference in formulation concerning the causes of the war and with regard to the emperor's behaviour towards the Goths. Philostorgius lays the entire responsibility for the war on the Goths, who, driven away by the Huns and accepted in Roman territory, were inclined to plundering, and later on started an undeclared war: he doesn't refer to the responsibility of the Romans, who, according to Ammianus (31, 5, 1–8), caused the violent reaction of the Goths.

This partiality for Valens is made more evident by a particular item in the narrative describing his reign, which is very different from the usual standpoint of Philostorgius. It is evident in his entire work that he takes a legitimist position, defending the power of the rulers, even if he didn't like them, against the usurpers; also, during the period with which we are concerned, the conspiracy of Theodorus is narrated in this way, although making it evident that Valens also killed some innocent people (*HE* 9, 15). From this perspective the story of the usurpation of Procopius is very important. According to Philostorgius, he took refuge with his wife to Chalcedon, hiding in the property of Eunomius, who was in another place; afterwards, he went to Constantinople and seized power without any violence. When he fought against Valens, he was defeated owing to the betrayal of his officers Gomarius and Agelius; he then went to Nicaea, where Florentius, who had been designated by him as the town governor, arrested him and gave him to Valens. So Procopius was decapitated; while Florentius was burned alive by his soldiers, because he had killed many of their comrades, Valens' partisans. Philostorgius tells furthermore that Eunomius went to Procopius in Cyzicus and obtained the liberation of some men who had been imprisoned because they were partisans of Valens; Procopius also liberated Aetius, who died not much later in Constantinople. Then, Eunomius, accused because he gave refuge to Procopius, was exiled for a period in Mauretania.[66]

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[65] Philostorg. *HE* 9, 17; see Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 582 and, more widely, Marasco, "L'imperatore Valente nella storiografia ecclesiastica", in: *L'imperatore nella storiografia ecclesiastica: immagine, potere, ideologia. Convegno Internazionale di studi (Roma, 28 febbraio—2 marzo 2002)*, in *Mediterraneo antico* 5 (2002), in press.

[66] Philostorg. *HE* 9, 5–6 and 8. About Procopius' links with Eunomius see Th.

Philostorgius' story is very significant not only owing to his otherwise unknown information about the relationships of the usurper with Eunomius and Aetius, but also due to a series of particular incidents described very differently from Ammianus' version, although that version is the nearest. Ammianus locates the first refuge of Procopius in Chalcedon, but says that he hid in the house of senator Strategius;[67] he also relates that Procopius was captured in a wood near Nacolia, owing to the betrayal of Florentius. He considers Florentius as a simple tribune, maintaining that he and his accomplice Barchalbas were immediately killed by Valens, and he disapproves of this decision of the emperor.[68] These differences in the particulars are not details without meaning, but are due to a very different evaluation of the facts. The other sources indeed give a negative judgement on Procopius' usurpation; Ammianus (26, 6, 18–19) particularly emphasizes the ridiculousness of his theatrical behaviour at the beginning of the revolt. Philostorgius, on the other hand, has a great admiration for Procopius; and this is evident right away from the detail that he obtained power without any violence. This admiration is confirmed by the accounts of the betrayals that Procopius suffered and of Florentius' punishment by his own soldiers, which tallies with the widely known perfidy of the traitor. This version confutes the accusations against Valens by both the pagans and the orthodox, in that he killed Procopius' traitors.

Philostorgius' admiration for Procopius is, in my view, due to his relationship with Eunomius and because of his just treatment of Aetius. Indeed Philostorgius, by claiming that Eunomius wasn't in Chalcedon when Procopius escaped, exonerated him from the accusation that he offered refuge to the usurper. But Eunomius' success in the liberation of the prisoners demonstrated his good relationship with the usurper, and this caused his exile. Thus, Philostorgius' judgement seems to be determined once again by the polemical exigencies of his sect: despite his partiality for Valens, who was the last

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A. Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism*, II (Philadelphia, 1979), 425–28; Brennecke, op. cit., 214–16.

[67] Amm. Marc. 26, 6, 5. According to Zosimus (4, 4, 3), Procopius went to Caesarea in Cappadocia, where he had a lot of property.

[68] Amm. Marc. 26, 9, 8–10. Socrates (*HE* 4, 5, 4; cf. also Sozomen. *HE* 6, 8, 2–3) says that Valens killed Agelon and Gomarius, not mantaining his word, and describes Procopius' execution in a very different way from Ammianus and Philostorgius.

Arian emperor, his moderate stance, far from the Eunomian excesses,[69] moved Philostorgius to defend the rebel Procopius, who had a greater liking for Eunomius.

According to Philostorgius, Valens' reign remains the last positive period, because it was characterized by the affirmation of Arianism; from that moment, due to the politics of Gratian and Theodosius, the evolution of the Empire is characterized by a very different spirit, which strengthens Philostorgius' polemic and darkens his vision of the history, and particularly of the future, of the Christian Empire. The providentialist perspective, so typical of ecclesiastical historiography since Eusebius, is substituted in Philostorgius by a very negative vision, inspired by apocalyptical conceptions. This is due to the fact that, according to him, the history wasn't progress in the victory of the faith, but a sudden falling of the Eunomian faith, persecuted and defeated from the reigns of Gratian and Theodosius on.

Philostorgius was very far from both the orthodox and the pagan traditions about Gratian; he was hostile[70] to that emperor, and particularly, in the narration of his death, accused him and compared him with Nero, linking his persecution of the Arians with Nero's persecution of the Christians.[71]

Less evident, but not less efficacious, was Philostorgius' attack on Theodosius, the other emperor to persecute the Arians. Writing about his arrival in Constantinople, Philostorgius (*HE* 9, 19) emphasizes that the first action of Theodosius was the restitution of the churches to the orthodox and the expulsion of the Eunomians and the Arians from the city. Theodosius' persecution then becomes stronger and Philostorgius (*HE* 10, 6) narrates, with an evident involvement, the expulsion of the Eunomian courtiers and the exile of Eunomius himself, whom the historian then met and came to appreciate. Here starts a progressive polemic by Philostorgius against Theodosius, which is only partially connected to the hostile pagan tradition and fits its themes according to its own exigencies.

With regard to the victory over Maximus, the usurper who killed Gratian, Philostorgius (*HE* 10, 8), accepting Theodosius' right to power and condemning the avidity of the usurper, relates that

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[69] See particularly Simonetti, op. cit., 390–93 and 402–5; Brennecke, op. cit., 181ff.

[70] See Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 582–83.

[71] Philostorg. *HE* 10, 5; see Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 583.

Theodosius sent his generals against Maximus, and they defeated and caught him. This story is very different from the hostile pagan account, which accused Theodosius of having hesitated to make war on the usurper because of his weakness and dissoluteness and to have decided only to do so after Justina, Valentinian's mother, exploited his weakness with women and ordered him to make war in exchange for her daughter Galla.[72] Philostorgius instead described the marriage to Galla as a previous and independent fact, a consequence of the death of Theodosius' first wife, Flacilla, in 386;[73] it seems he wanted to obscure the pagan version, which he didn't like because of Justina's Arian faith.

Philostorgius' narrative about Maximus' defeat is completely different also from the orthodox tradition, because it doesn't record that Theodosius wanted to revenge Gratian and it denies any intervention by God in Theodosius' favour during the war, elements which were all essential for the orthodox;[74] furthermore, attributing the victory to the generals, Philostorgius excludes a direct participation of Theodosius in the military operations, which was a fact according to the rest of both the pagan and the orthodox traditions. The historian wanted to take away from Theodosius' victory not only its religious significance, as demonstrated by God's approval, but also its military significance, as shown by the emperor's skills.

There is the same situation with the usurpation of Eugenius and the battle at the river Frigidus: Philostorgius (*HE* 11, 2), accepting the rights of Theodosius because he was the true emperor, relates that he went over the Alps through a betrayal (an element which was unknown to the rest of the tradition), and doesn't speak about the divine wind at Frigidus, a very important topic in the orthodox tradition up until the contemporaneous historians.[75] So, Philostorgius'

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[72] Zosim. 4, 44; see F. Paschoud, *Zosime. Histoire nouvelle*, T. II, 2e Partie (*Livre IV*) (Paris, 1979), 436–38, which inclines to accept Zosimus' version.

[73] Philostorg. *HE* 10, 7.

[74] Cf. Aug. *De civ. Dei* 5, 26; Oros. 7, 35; Socrat. *HE* 5, 12–14; Sozomen. *HE* 7, 13–14.

[75] Aug. *De civ. Dei* 5, 26, 1; Paulin. *Vita Ambr.* 31, 3; Rufin. *HE* 2, 33; Oros. 7, 35, 12–19; Socrat. *HE* 5, 25, 12–15; Sozomen. *HE* 7, 24, 6–7; Theodoret. *HE* 5, 24, 3–17; *Chron. Gall.*, in: *MGH, Auct. Ant.*, IX, *Chronica Minora* I (Berolini, 1892), 650. Pagan tradition showed Theodosius' victory as a consequence of a sudden attack at night (Zosim. 4, 58, 4–5). About the sources' analysis and the battle's reconstruction see particularly Paschoud, *Zosime*, T. II, 2e Partie, 474–500, with bibliography.

legitimist stance is linked to a polemic against the orthodox tradition; he rejects the possibility of divine help for the Arians' persecutor, Theodosius. Philostorgius' judgement about Theodosius is consequently very critical, even although he uses insinuation more than direct attacks: the historian admits the complete success of Theodosius' political action, a fair prize for his fight against paganism, but accuses him of dissoluteness and claims that because of it the emperor took the dropsy which led to his death.[76]

Theodosius' reign remains the most important era in the radical change of the Empire's politics, with consequences emphasised by Philostorgius referring widely to the supernatural. Theodosius' victory against Maximus is then followed by a long narration of fatal prodigies. Philostorgius (*HE* 10, 11) relates that after Theodosius' entering Rome in 389, a star which was very similar to a double-edged sword appeared in the sky, as a portent of great calamities for the world. During the same period, two extraordinary human beings came into the world, the first, exceptional for his height, in Syria, the other one, very short, but also very intelligent, in Egypt: they both lived until the age of 25 years. Philostorgius also narrated other prodigies: some of them were contemporaneous, others were earlier.

The birth of strange human beings as portents of calamities for the State was very popular and generally agreed upon among the pagans[77]—and likewise natural phenomena, such as earthquakes and seaquakes. Such an interpretation was not extraneous to the Christians: for example Socrates, developing interpretations disseminated among the pagans,[78] considered the earthquakes and the famines which happened during the reign of Valens as portents of calamities for the State and the Church;[79] these affirmations, reflecting hostility towards an emperor who was in favour of the Arians, were nevertheless isolated and naturally disappear from the orthodox tradition concerning events which happened after Valens' death and the victory of orthodoxy.

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[76] Philostorg. *HE* 11, 2; see Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 584–85.

[77] Cf. for instance Amm. Marc. 19, 12, 19–20. Generally see M. Delcourt, *Stérilités mysterieuses et naissances maléfiques dans l'antiquité classique* (Liège-Paris, 1938), 46ff.; R. Bloch, *Les prodiges dans l'Antiquité classique* (Paris, 1963), 119ff. Cf. also, on the same period, Theophan. *chron.*, 68, 17–19; 70, 12–19.

[78] Cf. Amm. Marc. 26, 10, 15–19.

[79] Socrat. *HE* 4, 3, 3–5; 4, 11, 4–7.

In Philostorgius' work, on the contrary, these prodigies become very significant precisely since that period: in particular, the star's apparition has been connected with an apocalyptical inclination that characterized his following narration.[80] The apparition of this star near to Theodosius' entrance to Rome is also described by some of the chroniclers,[81] but without attaching much importance to it; instead, according to Philostorgius, this and the other contemporaneous prodigies characterized a decisive moment in the evolution of the history of the Empire and of Christianity. After the victory over Maximus and the confirmation of the full power of the orthodox group and of the Arians' persecutor Theodosius, the fight among the various Christian factions was won decisively by the orthodox, while the small Arian and Eunomian factions were persecuted.

So, the following narration is characterized by the prodigies and their eschatological interpretation as warnings of the disaster which would engulf the Empire, which was beginning to accept a faith which was, according to Philostorgius, a heresy. The historian (*HE* 11, 7) narrated that the disasters announced by the star happened in his age, during Arcadius' reign, when disasters took place which had never happened: there were military routs, pestilences, famines, devastations by barbarians and wild beasts in Europe, in parts of Asia and in Africa. The cities were destroyed by earthquakes, and in many places the earth opened up killing the inhabitants; floods, heavy hailstorms and other prodigies confirmed the divine anger. The apocalyptical look of this tale is confirmed by the following narration (*HE* 11, 8), which was about the invasion of the Huns in Thrace and Asia and the devastation made by the Mazices and Ausorians in Africa.

The most shocking thing is the desperate dramatic and tone of this catalogue of disasters and bad omens, which, according to Philostorgius, were signs of the divine anger against the Empire. The

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[80] See particularly Bidez, *Philostorgius*, CXII–CXXI, who underlines the parallels with the *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, an unorthodox Syriac text of the Vth century inspired by the eschatological interpretations of the book of Daniel (ed. J.P. Arendzen, *Journal of Theological Studies* 2 (1900) 401–16; new edition, with an English translation, by A. Vööbus, *CSCO*, *Script. Syri.*, T. 162 [Louvain, 1975], 27–35); see also Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 589–90.

[81] Marcellin. Com., *ad ann.* 389 (in: *MGH*, *Auct. Ant.*, XI, *Chron. Min.* II, 62); cf. *Consul. It., ad ann.* 390 (in: *Chron. Min.* I 292): . . . *signum apparuit in celo quasi columna pendens per dies XXX.*

military routs and the devastations by barbarians are well known and the earthquakes and the atmospheric phenomena in this period are testified to by the chroniclers,[82] but without the significance that Philostorgius attributes to them. In particular, the account of a very strange hailstorm probably refers to the atmospheric phenomenon which happened in Constantinople and its hinterland on September 30th, 404;[83] the orthodox tradition, on the other hand, as was confirmed by Socrates, interpreted this phenomenon as a sign of God's anger for the condemnation of the orthodox patriarch John Chrysostomus, seeing as a confirmation of this the death of Empress Eudoxia, who was the leader of the patriarch's enemies.[84] There is no similar interpretation in Philostorgius: according to him, the strange hailstorm was due to divine anger for the religious politics of the emperor against the Arians and the Eunomians.

The eschatological inspiration becomes evident with regard to the peace between the Visigoth king Athaulf and Honorius: Philostorgius (*HE* 12, 4) relates that the kingdom of iron and the kingdom of clay were united together, referring to the Book of Daniel's prophecy (2, 31–45), and he repeats this affirmation when he writes about the marriage of Athaulf and Galla Placidia, saying that in those days the clay and the iron coalesced. This inspiration is not original, because it is frequent in some chronographic sources about this marriage[85] and is written about in the *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*.[86] The eschatological interpretation of these events was very popular; but it is interesting to see that the orthodox tradition, represented by Orosius and Jordanes, tries to attribute to this marriage a very positive significance, as a guarantee wanted by God for the salvation of the Empire.[87] Here, Philostorgius developed his narration in a very different way from that of the orthodox, taking inspi-

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[82] See for example Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 590–91; B. Croke, *The Chronicle of Marcellinus. A Translation and Commentary* (Sydney, 1995), 61.

[83] See Marcellin. Com., *ad ann.* 404, in: *Chron. Min.* II, 68; *Chron. Pasch.* I 569, 1–3.

[84] Socrat. *HE* 6, 19, 4–6; Sozomen. *HE* 8, 27, 1–2.

[85] Hydat. *ad ann.* 414, in: *Chron. Min.* II, 18: *Ataaulfus apud Narbonam Placidiam duxit uxorem: in quo profetia Danihelis putatur impleta, ut ait filiam regis austri sociandam regi aquilonis.* Cf. Isidor. *Hist. Goth.* (ibid., 275).

[86] Vööbus, op. cit., 28; see Bidez, *Philostorgius*, CXVII.

[87] Oros. 7, 40, 2; Iordan. *Get.* 160.

ration from a pessimistic vision of the situation and of the destiny of the Empire.

The religious interpretation of natural phenomena is also repeated with regard to the reaching of adult age by Theodosius II, in 418: Philostorgius (*HE* 12, 8) tells that there was then an eclipse, with such deep darkness as to obscure the stars, followed by a drought which killed men and animals everywhere. Then a meteor appeared, warning of wars and enormous disasters. The following year, there were earthquakes and fires in the sky, which seemed to destroy all hope of salvation. Philostorgius then wrote that the earthquakes swallowed lots of people, and that many people were killed by the wheat that fell down from the damaged granaries, and thus good became evil. He thought these phenomena were punishments sent by God and cited the rationalistic and scientific beliefs widespread among pagans; in accordance with the Bible, he believed that earthquakes were sent by God to convert sinners and make them repent.[88]

The chroniclers confirm the eclipse and the star's apparition in 418;[89] and there were indeed severe earthquakes during the same year or the next, particularly in Jerusalem and Palestine.[90] But here the short accounts given by the chroniclers are very far from Philostorgius' apocalyptical tone and try to affirm that they were local phenomena, although the area affected could shock Christians. Thus Philostorgius developed a religious vision of these phenomena, considering them as signs of divine anger, in accordance with his pessimistic vision of the condition of mankind, destined to ruin after the defeat of the true faith.

It is not surprising that, after the exile of Eunomius and the condemnation of his followers, Philostorgius' work gives very short shrift to real ecclesiastical history, since his Arian Church was scattered and persecuted. Perhaps Philostorgius had given details of Arian persecutions which were not referred to by Photius and the other orthodox sources; but the rest of Philostorgius' work is about political events.

The historian sees very clearly the most important phenomenon during the period after Theodosius: the concentration of power in

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[88] Philostorg. *HE* 12, 9–10.

[89] *Consul. Ital.*, in: *MGH, Auct. Ant.* IX, *Chron. Min.* I, 300; Hydat., in: *Chron. Min.* II, 19; Marcellin. Com. ibid. II, 74; *Chron. Pasch.* I 574, 13–15.

[90] Hydat. loc. cit. (A.D. 418); Marcellin. Com. loc. cit.; *Consul. Const.*, in: *Chron. Min.* II, 246 (A.D. 419).

the hands of the ministers, in the West as well as in the East; and he is very critical of them. His different attitudes to them are probably due to personal preference, very understandable in a contemporary, and certainly to partiality, in view of his religious position. He seems to be less hostile to the prefect Rufinus, emphasising his ambition, personal qualities and eloquence, than to the emperor Arcadius, who he finds despicable in comparison (*HE* 11, 3). His attitude to Eutropius is also much more hostile, and comes not only from the hostility, as Philostorgius stresses, to a man who was a slave and a eunuch,[91] but also to his religious politics, since Eutropius strengthened the laws against the Arians, transferred to Tyana Eunomius' relics, kept by the monks, and fired his books (*HE* 11, 5). Philostorgius shows such a strong hatred towards Eutropius as to approve of the barbarian boldness used by Arcadius' wife Eudoxia, who set her husband against Eutropius, who had offended her. He also approved of Arcadius' behaviour, who at that time showed himself to be a real emperor, killing his minister (*HE* 11, 6).

Philostorgius' tale about the defeat and death of Eutropius, as Photius emphasises, was very different from that of other sources: while Eunapius considered as a cause the hostility and the intrigues of Gainas,[92] giving an account partially favourable to Eutropius, Philostorgius stressed as a cause the guilt of the minister, who had offended empress Eudoxia: this element was certainly a strong factor in Eutropius' fall,[93] but it is used by the historian to add an accusation against the eunuch.

The ample description of the barbarian invasions, considered by Philostorgius (*HE* 11, 7–8) as a consequence of Arcadius' politics against the Arians, as well as of the pestilences and the famines, completes a very negative summary of this emperor's reign. Only the tale of Gainas' revolt and attempt to take possession of Constantinople is different. Philostorgius (*HE* 11, 8) claims that a divine army appeared to save the city, killed barbarians and frightened Gainas, who, during the night, escaped from the city with his men. This tale

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[91] Philostorg. *HE* 11, 4.

[92] Zosim. 5, 17, 5–18, 2.

[93] See, e.g., J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops* (Oxford, 1991), 105. Philostorgius agrees with a similar link by Sozomenus (*HE* 8, 7, 3). The difference in the account from that of orthodox historians could depend on the fragmentary way in which Philostorgius' version has been transmitted: see F. Paschoud, *Zosime. Histoire nouvelle*, T. III, 1re Partie (*Livre V*) (Paris, 1986), 139–40.

is very different from that of Eunapius, according to which Gainas tried to take possession of Constantinople from the outside, using also seven thousand barbarians within the city, and was defeated by his own haste.[94] Eunapius' narration attempted to contradict the official version, which attributed Gainas' defeat to the intervention of divine power.[95] Very interesting in this perspective is the progressive alignment of Philostorgius with the orthodox ecclesiastical historians. His version, certainly independent in the details, shows a great similarity to Socrates' and Sozomenus' tales. According to them, Gainas' attempts to fire the palace were stopped for three nights by divine providence—by the apparition of an army composed of armed angels.[96]

Also evident is Philostorgius' agreement with the providential conception of divine assistance as a defence of the Christian Empire, which the pagan Eunapius strongly opposed.[97]

Finally, although the very fragmentary condition of the text, is evident, in my view, the very negative judgement of Philostorgius about Arcadius' reign, which was characterized by continuous defeats, devastations and natural disasters, attributed by the historian to God's anger against the emperor's politics towards Arianism. When writing about Eutropius' elimination and Gainas' revolt, Philostorgius had a legitimist position; and this is understandable if only we remember his hostility towards the eunuch, who was a persecutor of Eunomius' memory and an enemy of the barbarians, who were threatening Constantinople.

The polemic against the pagans and the agreement with the Christian orthodox tradition also characterize Philostorgius' last book, which narrates the events from Stilicho's death to Valentinian III's rise to the throne. Philostorgius here largely uses the contemporaneous pagan Olympiodorus' work, then recently published, which was about the history of the Western Empire from 407 to 425;[98] but

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[94] Zosim. 5, 19; about the unreliability of this version see, e.g., Liebeschuetz, op. cit., 111–12; Paschoud, *Zosime . . . Livre V*, 154–55.

[95] See Liebeschuetz, op. cit., 113 and n. 13; 275–78 (about Arcadius' column); 114–16 and 267–68 (about Synesius' testimony).

[96] Socrat. *HE* 6, 6, 18–21; Sozomen. *HE* 8, 4, 12.

[97] Eunap. fr. 68.

[98] See Bidez, *Philostorgius*, XV, CXXXIX, 140; J.F. Matthews, "Olympiodoros of Thebes and the History of the West (A.D. 407–425)", *JRS* 55 (1970), 81 and n. 24; B. Baldwin, "Olympiodorus of Thebes", *L'Antiquité Classique* 49 (1980), 229–30; Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 591 and 596–98.

this use is principally critical and in contrast with Olympiodorus' own interpretation. This is evident in the narrative about Stilicho and his death. Philostorgius is clearly hostile to Stilicho and again makes diffuse accusations against him of collusion with Alaric and of his ambition to absolute power,[99] which are also often mentioned in the orthodox tradition as justifying Stilicho's execution.[100]

Philostorgius (*HE* 12, 1) relates that the *magister officiorum* Olympius saved Emperor Honorius from a conspiracy prepared by Stilicho, stopping with his own hand the sword which was threatening to kill him; after that, he helped to eliminate Stilicho. Photius' summary observes, although not clearly, that this tale was completely contrary to Olympiodorus' one, according to which Olympius did not save the emperor, but conspired against Stilicho, causing his death; only afterwards did he become *magister officiorum* and pay for his guilt by being beaten to death.[101]

Philostorgius corrected the pagan Olympiodorus' tale in a way which was favourable to Olympius and hostile to Stilicho. The motives for this choice were, in my view, principally religious: thus, while Stilicho was clearly hated by the western Christians, Olympius was a firm Christian.[102] So, also in this event, his divergence from the pagan Olympiodorus' version shows that Philostorgius was closer to the orthodox tradition.

The polemic against the pagans is also evident in his account of the earlier conquest of Athens by Alaric; Philostorgius (*HE* 12, 2) seems to be engaged in a controversy with Eunapius' tale, according to which Athens was saved by the apparition of Athena Promachos and Achilles, who made Alaric negotiate and leave the city and the Attica.[103] Philostorgius wanted to deny the intervention of the pagan gods, by contradicting the factual basis, the presumed salvation of Athens and Attica.

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[99] Philostorg. *HE* 12, 1–2; cf. Oros. 7, 38; Sozomen. *HE* 8, 25, 2–4; 9, 4; see Zecchini, *Filostorgio*, 586–88, also about the accusation, characteristic to Philostorgius, according to which Stilicho's ambitions were confirmed by his making of money.

[100] Cf. Oros. 7, 38; Sozomen., locc. citt.; Marcell. Com., *ad ann.* 405, in: *Chron. Min.* II, 69.

[101] Cf. Olympiod. frr. 5, 1; 8, 2; Zosim. 5, 32, 1–35, 1.

[102] Cf. Aug. *ep.* 96–97; Zosim. 5, 32, 1.

[103] Zosim. 5, 6, 1–3. Philostorgius' version is confirmed by other sources in the literature (Claudian. *in Rufin.* 2, 191; Hieron. *epist.* 60, 16) and from the archaeological ones (Paschoud, *Zosime . . . Livre V*, 95 with bibliography). See P. Castren, *Post-Erulian Athens* (Helsinki, 1994), 9.

Philostorgius' approach is very different when he writes (*HE* 12, 3) about what happened after Stilicho's death, culminating in the sack of Rome by Alaric. When he writes about Stilicho's murder and Honorius' behaviour his version is different from that in the orthodox tradition but similar to the pagan one. In fact he relates that Stilicho's son Eucherius found refuge in a church, but was killed by order of Honorius: this was why the barbarians of Stilicho's faction joined with Alaric in the war against the Romans. Philostorgius' tale is, in some parts, similar to that of Zosimus, which comes from Olympiodorus;[104] but it is otherwise elaborated. Zosimus considers the decision of Stilicho's partisans to join with Alaric as a consequence of the massacre of their relatives, which had happened before Eucherius' death. Furthermore he makes no hostile judgement of Eucherius' killing, because he did not have to condemn its sacrilegious aspect. Philostorgius' account is much different from the version of the orthodox Orosius, which makes no mention of the violation of the asylum and justifies Eucherius' killing because of his attitude, which was favourable to pagans and hostile to Christians.[105] The similarity with the pagan tradition is also evident in the account which claims that in Rome, during the 408 or 410 siege, there were episodes of cannibalism.[106]

Besides this, Rome's seizure in 410 was narrated by Philostorgius (*HE* 12, 3) in a very dramatic way, as demonstrated by his accounts about the use of "fire and sword" by the barbarians, and about the ruination of the city when Alaric left to sack Campania. This interpretation was probably near to that of the pagans, who considered the sack of Rome as a consequence of the abandonment of their faith;[107] this version is also different from the orthodox one, which tried to minimize the dimension and the effects of Rome's sack,[108]

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[104] Cf. Zosim. 5, 35,4–5; 37, 4. About the apparent contradiction between these two items, see Paschoud, op. cit., 255–56.

[105] Oros. 7, 38, 6: . . . *occisus Eucherius, qui ad conciliandum sibi favorem paganorum restitutione templorum et eversione ecclesiarum inbuturum se regni primordia minabatur.*

[106] Cf. Olympiod. fr. 4. Zosimus (5, 40, 1) refers to the account as a diffused fright during the siege in 408, Procopius (*Bell.* 3, 2, 27) and Sozomenus (*HE* 9, 8, 8) as really happened in 410. About the chronological difficulties created by Philostorgius' tale see Paschoud, *Zosime . . . Livre V*, 271; they could come from the confusion of the summariser.

[107] Zecchini, Filostorgio, 589 and, about the polemic between pagans and Christians on this, P. Courcelle, *Histoire littéraire des grandes invasions germaniques*, III (Paris, 1964), 50ff.; F. Paschoud, *Roma Aeterna* (Rome, 1967), 239ff.

[108] Cf. Oros. 7, 39, 3–40, 1; Sozomen. *HE* 9, 9 (which translate to Rome the

to refute the pagans' accusations, and to defend Emperor Honorius' behaviour.

Philostorgius' version of the sack of Rome confirms the impression made by this event in Constantinople,[109] and also proves his willingness to consider and use both pagan and orthodox traditions. Philostorgius, as a member of a faction which was excluded from power and persecuted in the same way as the pagans, was entirely free to criticize the stance of orthodox Honorius, who, not respecting Eucherius' asylum, had him killed, offended God and, causing many of Stilicho's barbarians to become Alaric's allies, made the Goth king stronger. He used pagan accounts and added his condemnation of Honorius' sacrilege, which was useful for highlighting not only the political but also the religious transgressions of the orthodox emperor.

But Philostorgius' attitude to Honorius is, on the whole, not hostile: he describes his efforts for Rome's reconstruction and his mildness towards the usurper Attalus (*HE* 12, 5). Writing about Iovianus' and Sebastianus' usurpations and the rapid rise to the throne and the fall of Heraclianus, Philostorgius (*HE* 12, 6) indicates that in this way Providence never permits limits to be passed but helps rightful kings, not usurpers. This affirmation is clearly linked to Philostorgius' legitimist standpoint; however, if we consider the conditions in the West during those years and the serious threats from the barbarians, we could think that this attitude of Philostorgius was made stronger by the conviction that Honorius was for a long time the only force able to stop the break-up of that part of the Empire.

Philostorgius was much more hostile to Theodosius II. His reaching adult age was characterized, as we have seen, by apocalyptical portents and natural disasters, which heralded an unlucky reign. Philostorgius' different attitude was due to the different function of the two emperors: Honorius in the West was the only defence against the barbarians; while the emperor of the East was, according to Philostorgius, the persecutor of his faith and the one responsible for the victory of the hated orthodoxy, under which it would be difficult

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sack which, according to Philostorgius, Alaric did in Campania). Socrates (*HE* 7, 10) considered it as an isolated fact and also describes the way in which Alaric escaped from Rome with a fright, because he knew that Theodosius II had sent an army against him from the East.

[109] About this see W.E. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome* (Princeton, 1968), 10ff.

for the Eunomians to survive. So, the last religious account in Philostorgius' writings (very significantly appearing as an isolated incident in the last three books, which are otherwise dedicated almost entirely to profane history) is about the succession after Eunomius' death of his nephew Lucianus as the head of the Eunomians in Constantinople: he became guilty of avidity and, frightened of being punished, left his sect, taking with him many followers (*HE* 12, 11). These facts, which completed the ruin of the Eunomian church—depriving it of a worthy leader and condemning it to yet another division—explain Philostorgius' deep pessimism about the destiny of his faith, which was persecuted and unable adequately to react.

The analysis of Philostorgius' work confirms his strongly polemical approach in the *HE* to both pagans and orthodox, his considerable knowledge of the historiographical traditions of the enemy factions, and his agreement with the contemporaneous ecclesiastical historiography, although everything in him was adapted to his personal vision of the world. The providentialist tendency, an essential element in orthodox historiography, was deflected in Philostorgius, where it became a strongly pessimistic view, a natural consequence of a different idea of the destinies of the Christian Church, which, according to the Eunomian historian, was dominated by heretics, who were helped by the imperial power.

Philostorgius' historiographical technique is linked, as we have seen, to Eusebius' tradition, which had been followed by the orthodox historians. The only element which seems to be contrary to this continuity is the complete lack of documents in the fragments. But, in my opinion, the belief according to which this proved that Philostorgius didn't quote documents[110] is not reliable: it is natural to think that Photius omitted them since they were not important for his purposes. It is easy to understand how, for the orthodox tradition which transmitted to us Philostorgius' writings while condemning him for his Arian faith, the documents which he may have quoted appeared unacceptable and sometimes embarrassing.

So, Philostorgius appears as a historian who follows the tradition started by Eusebius, but with particular polemical conclusions. His attitude to profane history is not different from that of the other

[110] A.E. Nobbs, "Philostorgius' View of the Past", in: G. Clarke (ed.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Rushcutters Bay, 1990), 261.

ecclesiastical historians, except for his judgement about emperors and other individuals, which was determined not only by their attitude to Christian faith, but also by their conduct towards Arianism and the Eunomian faction in particular. Important is his particular interest in the most recent events in the Western part of the Empire, and this links him with the pagan Olympiodorus, who was his source and at the same time the object of his polemic. Probably, in the Western events, much more dramatically than in the Eastern ones, Philostorgius saw a confirmation of his own apocalyptical vision of the destinies of the Empire, as the result of the victory of the hated orthodoxy.

II. *Gelasius of Cyzicus*

After the great flowering during the first decades of the Vth century, ecclesiastical historiography was neglected for a period: only during the last quarter of this century was this literary genre taken up again—by one Gelasius of Cyzicus—but for particular purposes, where polemic was linked to the interests of erudition and research. The only testimonies concerning this writer are offered by his work's preface, which is also the source of the accounts given by Photius, who evinces many confusions and remains uncertain about the author's true identity.[111] Gelasius tells us that he is the son of a presbyter of Cyzicus;[112] at one point he went to Bitinia, during the usurpation of Basiliscus (A.D. 475–476), who was favourable to the Monophysites and a persecutor of the orthodox. Gelasius engaged in controversies with the Monophysites, who claimed that they were faithful interpreters of the Nicaean orthodoxy. During these controversies the topics most under discussion were the facts and the thesis of the council of Nicaea.[113] So, Gelasius decided to write three books on this topic, which are still extant and which deal with the events of Constantine's reign. These books attribute greatest importance to the council of Nicaea: even the title is discussed, because these books are sometimes defined as the "*syntagma* of the holy council in Nicaea", although

[111] Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 88; cf. van Deun, in Part. I, Ch. 5, with bibliography. Recently Hansen (see Bibliography), pp. IX–XII rejected the attribution of this work to Gelasius.

[112] Gel. Cyz. *HE* proem. 2.

[113] Gel. Cyz. *HE* proem. 9ff.

the title *Ecclesiastical History* appears in the heading of the individual books.[114]

The sources of this work have been analysed and discussed with respect to Gelasius' claims. He tells us that he used the *Acta* of the Nicaean council, which were retrieved by Dalmatius, bishop of Cyzicus. Gelasius read them in his father's house when he was young. He selected parts from them, which he used later, because he couldn't find the original; their use is particularly precious, because they also contain quotations from documents which were unknown to other sources.[115] Gelasius also records as among his sources the presbyter John, an ancient and good writer, and Eusebius and Rufinus: the latter he mistakenly thought was present at the Nicaean council.[116]

The studies on Gelasius' sources[117] have revealed considerable use not only of Eusebius and Rufinus, but also of Socrates and Theodoretus, who is quoted by Gelasius[118] in his discussion about the accusations of minimal orthodoxy on the part of Eusebius.[119]

Another source is the lost Gelasius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History*, that Gelasius quotes, considering it as by Rufinus.[120] Gelasius relied on it heavily,[121] and F. Winkelmann exploited his work to reconstruct that of his Caesarean predecessor.[122] Uncertain, however, is his use of Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*.[123]

Very much discussed is the derivation of the documents concerning

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[114] Cf. *Gelasius Kirchengeschichte*, hrsg. G. Loeschcke und M. Heinemann (Leipzig, 1918), XXVIII.

[115] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* proem. 2–3; 20.

[116] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* proem. 21–23.

[117] See particularly Loeschcke and Heinemann, op. cit., XXX–XXXVII; F. Scheidweiler, "Die Kirchengeschichte des Gelasius", *Byzant. Zeitschr.* 46 (1953), 277–301; F. Winkelmann, "Die Quellen der Historia Ecclesiastica des Gelasius von Cyzicus (nach 475)", *Byzantinoslavica* 27 (1966), 104–30; P. Nautin, "Gélase de Cyzique", in: *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, XX (Paris, 1984), 301–2.

[118] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* 2, 33, 7.

[119] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* 3, 6, 10–13.

[120] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* 8, 1. On the confusion between Gelasius of Caesarea and Rufinus in the ancient tradition and the relationship between their works see particularly Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen zur Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia, Sitzungsber. deutsch. Akad. d. Wissensch. zu Berlin, Klasse für Sprachen. Lit. und Kunst*, 1965, Nr. 3 (Berlin, 1966), 5ff.

[121] See A. Glas, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia, Byz. Arch.* Vol. 6 (Leipzig and Berlin, 1914); Hansen, op. cit., XLIVff.

[122] See particularly F. Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen . . .*; Id., "Charakter und Bedeutung der Kirchengeschichte des Gelasios von Kaisareia, in: *Polichordia. Festschrift F. Dölger, Byz. Forsch.* 1 (Amsterdam, 1966), 346ff.

[123] Winkelman, *Die Quellen . . .*, 105ff.; see Scheidweiler, *Byz. Zeitschr.* 1953, 293–301.

the Nicaean council, which constitute the most interesting item of Gelasius' work and are found only in part in other sources. Gelasius' use and the existence itself of the *Acta* of the council, collected by Dalmatius, have been denied by some historians.[124] Perhaps some of the documents referred to by Gelasius come from his homonymous of Caesarea's work;[125] while the analysis of the documents that Gelasius seems to have taken from Eusebius reveal interpolations and additions.[126]

The reliability of the documents referred to by Gelasius has moreover been the object of critique and reconsideration. For example, the speech used by Constantine to inaugurate the Nicaean council has been considered for a long time to be authentic and an essential element for judging the religious position of the emperor;[127] the extensive report about the discussion between the Nicaean fathers and the Arian philosopher Phaidon (*HE* 2, 14–24) has also been considered authentic and both the speech and the report have been judged to be derived from an official report of the council.[128] But recent studies have challenged this derivation and the authenticity of these documents, which are now thought to be falsifications.[129] So we must be cautious about the documents referred to by Gelasius when they are not confirmed by other sources.

The rest of Gelasius' narrative is of little interest or originality. He is very taken up with Constantine, dedicates the short first book to his rise to power, and also declares the intention to write other books about his birth and his father's reign.[130] This particular intention leads us to suppose that Gelasius used as a principal source a lost Constantine biography.[131]

In the second book, the narrative becomes more extended and detailed, concerning particularly the development of the Nicaean

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[124] Particularly by C.T.H.R. Erhardt, "Constantinian Documents in Gelasius of Cyzicus, Ecclesiastical History", *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 23 (1980), 48–57 and, in a more categorical form, by Nautin, op. cit.

[125] Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen* . . ., 29–32; 35–6.

[126] See particularly Erhardt, op. cit., 54–56.

[127] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* 2, 7, 1–41; see particularly H. Kraft, *Kaiser Konstantins religiöse Entwicklung* (Tübingen, 1955), 268–71.

[128] Cf. Loeschcke, "Das Syntagma des Gelasius Cyzicenus", *Rhein. Mus.* 61 (1906), 57ff.; 63ff.; 75–7.

[129] See Erhardt, op. cit.

[130] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* Proem. 26.

[131] See Nautin, op. cit., 302, who attributes this biography to the presbyter John.

council, with a report of dogmatic discussions, which characterize it and make it very different from the other ecclesiastical historians' narratives.

In the third book Gelasius dealt with the consequences of the Nicaean council, but the historical narrative is not much developed here either: much more space is devoted to the documents, particularly Eusebius' and Constantine's letters, which reveal the initiative of the principal exponents of the orthodox faith.

Very far from this there is a tale concerning Empress Helena's pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the discovery of the true Cross, which is linked to Gelasius of Caesarea's tradition,[132] and tales about the conversion of the Ethiopians, Iberians and Lazi, which are linked with Rufinus[133] and seem also to come from Gelasius of Caesarea.[134] The first of these digressions was probably motivated, in my view, by the religious importance of the legend; the other two seem to have been motivated by the exemplary value of these conversions of very far off people, particularly since they happened after the victory of orthodoxy in Nicaea.

Gelasius' work is very different from the ecclesiastical historiographic tradition, in that he attributes very little importance to historical events, instead concentrating on the doctrinal discussions which characterized the Nicaean council: Photius considered it more as a report of the synod than as a historical writing, and also took note of his humble and modest style.[135] On the other hand the work is a testimony to the development of the tradition favourable to Constantine and a demonstration of the doctrinal discussions held at the Nicaean council, which were still actual and, at the end of the Vth century, subject of the polemics which accompanied the birth and development of the Monophysite controversy.

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[132] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* 3, 6–7; see particularly Winkelmann, "Charakter und Bedeutung" . . ., 348 and 351; J.W. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta* (Leiden, 1992), 96ff.

[133] Gelas. Cyz. *HE* 3, 9–10; cf. Rufin. *HE* 10, 8; 10, 11.

[134] See Loeschcke and Heinemann, op. cit., XXXV; Winkelmann, *Untersuchungen* . . ., 74; Id., "Charakter und Bedeutung . . .", 348, n. 3; 351–52.

[135] Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 15, 4b, 23–27.

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CHAPTER NINE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREEK HISTORIOGRAPHY: PRISCUS, MALCHUS, CANDIDUS

Roger Blockley

Priscus and Malchus

The surviving Greek historiography of the fifth century divides basically into two categories: ecclesiastical history and the history of secular, mainly political and military, events. This division is, of course, far from clean. Any detailed investigation quickly indicates that such a neat schema is largely illusory on various grounds, one of which is the relatively small amount of historical text that has been preserved.

What Fontaine has argued for Latin literary works of the late fourth century—that the classical division of styles had at that time broken down and eclecticism was the rule—can also be maintained for the Greek historians of the fifth.[1] This argument can be made on organizational as well as stylistic grounds. Historiography itself shows development and differentiation.

For instance, in ecclesiastical historiography the relatively 'pure' form and straightforward style of Socrates confront the more sophisticated and outward-looking Sozomen (a younger contemporary), while the work of the Arian Philostorgius strays even further from the norm.

Then there is the *Universal History* of Eustathius of Epiphania, a work of which so little is presently known to survive that almost nothing can be, and has been, said about it. Yet to judge from the frequent references to it in later authors and other indications in their texts which suggest that they made great use of it, it is quite likely that significant amounts of this work could be recovered.[2] If

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[1] J. Fontaine, "Unité et diversité du mélange des genres et des tons chez quelques écrivains latins de la fin du IV^{e} siècle: Ausone, Ambroise, Ammien," *Fondation Hardt, Entretiens* (Vandoeuvres-Genevè, 1977), 425–72.

[2] For the references to Eustathius, see Müller, *FHG*, IV, 138–42. His work appears

this were so, it would be possible to place this work within another ancient tradition of historioraphy which flows from Diodorus through Dexippus to the Byzantine chronographers such as Theophanes, Cedrenus and Zonaras.

Finally, there are the national or regional histories. Best known are the Armenian ones, but there are also ones in Georgian and Syriac, the last typically using the chronicle form. Though these works were written in the native languages, they interacted with the Greek historiographical tradition and in some cases seem to have existed in Greek versions. One of the works which are the subject of this chapter, Candidus' History, has some of the characteristics of this type.[3]

The above discussion, though far from complete, serves to illustrate the diversity of forms and approaches available to historiography in the fifth century.

The writings of Priscus and Malchus, which will be discussed together in this chapter, fall within a group of works that have been called variously 'classicizing' and 'secular' histories. This group extends from the *History* of Eunapius of Sardis, writing in the second half of the fourth century, to that of Theophilactus Simocatta, writing during the reign of the emperor Heraclius (A.D. 610–41). The two terms themselves are modern and reflect a modern scholarly perception of two of the defining characteristics of these works.

The first acknowledges that, both in their form and in their content, the 'classicizing' histories consciously and continually refer to the major works of Greek historiography. Through elements of the selection and organization of material, through language, authorial presentation, and through direct reference, they position themselves within the classical tradition as defined historiographically by Thucydides and Herodotus (and Polybius) and also as defined more broadly by the other writers of the canon, especially Homer and

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to have been an Universal History up to the twelfth year of Anastasius (502), with perhaps an addition (or a separate work) on Anastasius' Persian war (502–06). The suggestion in my text, that significant portions of Eustathius' work are incorporated in later writers and that it was an important source of information, is not new but has never to my knowledge been explored. I intend to attempt this at some future time. A clearer picture of Eustathius' work could also assist in determining the provenience of some of the anonymous articles in the *Suda* which have been ascribed to Candidus or (wrongly) to Malchus.

[3] See below, p. 314.

Plato. The second term registers that the 'secular' histories are definitely not concerned with Church History, a genre that by the end of the fourth century had established itself as distinct, with its own conventions and subject matter. Implicitly, also, they are distinguished from other forms of historiography, especially those forms which leaned heavily towards chronography, a type of writing that, although of pre-Christian origin, had by the fourth century become closely identified with the Christian tradition.[4]

To acknowledge, however, that these histories had a number of shared characteristics is not to subscribe to the older view that they formed a self-consciously distinct group of works, each being the continuation of the one that preceded it. This view was based upon the false observation (made possible by the fragmentary nature of the fourth- and fifth-century works) that there was a chronological continuity from work to work, a characteristic only of the sixth- and seventh-century histories of Procopius, Menander and Theophylactus (and also of the ecclesiastical histories). Indeed, the fourth- and fifth-century histories were very diverse both in their character and in their aims, and in the elements of their classicism.[5] In addition, even though the classicizing nature of the historiography did dictate a distinct reserve in the incorporation of Christian affairs, the stance of the writers towards Christianity varies widely, from the violently hostile rhetoric of Eunapius, through the almost silence of Malchus, to the Christian secular historiography of Theophylactus. It is certainly erroneous to assume that these histories were anti-Christian by definition.[6]

On the other hand, the classicizing conventions of the historiography led to some shared characteristics of great importance. Although most, if not all, of the histories did contain an introductory section of varying length and detail, the core of all the works was an account of events contemporary, or near-contemporary, with the author; and

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[4] Cf. especially the rant by Eunapius (fr. 1) against the chronological interest of Dexippus.

[5] See the remarks of Blockley *FCH* I, pp. 86f.

[6] A.M. and A.D.E. Cameron, "Christianity and Tradition in the Historiography of the Later Empire," *Classical Quarterly* 58 (1964), 316–28, established the point that this reserve vis-à-vis Christianity arose not out of an anti-Christian sentiment, but out of classicism. Thus, late classicizing historiography was not by definition anti-Christian, although some of its practitioners, such as Eunapius and possibly Ammianus, brought to it anti-Christian views.

the narrative itself, in the manner of Thucydides (and Polybius), concentrated largely upon those political and military actions of interest to the elite and, therefore, defined as 'important'. Even though a large part of the traditional elite of the late period was excluded from participation in such events by the bureaucratic and autocratic nature of the state and by the professional (indeed, mercenary) nature of the military, this did not preclude their continued interest in them. Nevertheless, we can assume, although we cannot prove, that the readership for the classicizing histories, a type of writing rather difficult of access, was quite small.

The viewpoint of these histories was exclusivistic. Hence, ecclesiastical activity, which throughout the fourth and fifth centuries played an increasingly important role in both internal and external politics, was largely ignored or treated with great reserve. In contrast, foreign relations, especially as expressed through the diplomacy that developed during the fifth century, bulked large. But even here the elite preference for extrapolating the monolithic 'classical' vision upon the whole world that it knew, led it to continue to distance itself from outsiders through the catch-all conception of 'barbarian' and through the ignoring of national minorities within the Roman borders unless they constituted a military threat or a nuisance. Indeed, as the predominance of the eastern capital, Constantinople, grew during the fifth century, this tendency became even more marked.

The late classicizing historians are 'engaged' in the sense that they hold opinions, often strong, upon the events they describe and the personalities involved in them; and they express their views more or less openly. With the exception of Eunapius, however, who is hostile to the whole drift of government policy, they cannot be characterized as 'opposition'. While they are certainly critical of certain regimes and their policies, this criticism is usually informed by support for another set of policies imposed by another regime, often the one under which they are writing. On the other hand, while the form of governance of the Roman world is generally accepted, pessimism about the present circumstances, as set out in the narrative, is the rule. Even Procopius, writing about the achievements of the current regime (Justinian's), a circumstance that dictated caution, manages to impart a sense of equivocation, even disapproval.

Informed by the homogeneous classical education which was still standard at this period, written by men from an elite background, and directed at a readership (whatever its size) that was from the

same social and educational milieu, these histories reflected the interests and priorities of this elite. Despite their apparently different careers, Priscus and Malchus both came from and worked within this milieu, and their histories conformed to the expected norms.

Priscus was born at Panium in Thrace during the reign of Theodosius II, probably between 410 and and 420. He received the standard rhetorical and philosophical education and is described by later writers both as a rhetor (who practised declamations) and a sophist, although his professional career seems to have been as a civil servant. In his *History* he is closely associated with the general Maximinus, whom he accompanied in 449 on the famous diplomatic mission to the camp of the Hun king, Attila; perhaps in 450 on a mission from Constantinople to Rome; and in 451–2 to the Egyptian Thebaid to negotiate a peace with the Nobadae and Blemmyes. He last appears around 456 as an advisor, perhaps assessor, to Marcian's master of the offices, Euphemius. Priscus, therefore, was associated in some capacity with important figures of the reigns of Theodosius II and Marcian.[7]

Priscus published one *History*, which probably began with the accession of Attila and his brother Bleda to the Hunnic kingship in about 434 (though there might have been a preliminary survey of the background history of the Huns) and probably ended with the death of the emperor Leo in 474. The hostility which Priscus displays towards Theodosius II makes it most likely that his *History* was published, perhaps in more than one part, between 450 (the date of Theodosius' death) and ca. 480.

Even less is known about Malchus than about Priscus, but what is known invites both comparison and contrast. The *Suda* (M 120) calls Malchus a 'Byzantine', but his Semitic name makes Photius' statement (*Bibl. cod.* 78), that he was born in Philadelphia (in Syria), plausible; perhaps Byzantium was his long-term place of residence. Both the *Suda* and Photius call him a sophist, while the latter says that he excelled at rhetoric, an indication that he, like Priscus, received the traditional education of his day. Nothing is recorded about his career, although the statements of the *Suda* and Photius, when placed

[7] The point of reference for all substantive remarks on Priscus' historiography remains Blockley *FCH* I, ch. 3, pp. 48–70, since remarkably little work has appeared on the subject since that volume was published in 1981.

beside a certain interest which Malchus shows in grammarians, might suggest that he was some kind of educator or rhetorician.[8]

The *Suda* tells us that the full *History* of Malchus ran from Constantine (presumably Constantine I) to Anastasius, that is, from perhaps 330 to 491. Photius, on the other hand, says that it ran from the time when disease fell upon Leo (473/4) to the death of Nepos, although he adds that he had only seen a part of the work, which was defective at the beginning and the end, at the end apparently because of the author's death. Furthermore, no certainly identifiable fragment can be dated before 473/4 or after 480. It is possible, therefore, that the core of the original ran from 473/4 to 491, with an epitome covering the earlier period from 330 or thereabouts. If the statements about the end of the *History* in the *Suda* and in Photius both reflect what was read, then it appears that there was more than one version available, one truncated at 480, which informed both Photius and the compilers of the *Excerpta*. The date of the publication of the *History* must have been after the death of Zeno (491), to whom Malchus is implacably hostile, and most likely during the reign of Anastasius (491–518).

These two *Histories*, then, in the full-scale portions of their narrative covered, with some overlap, the years ca. 434 to probably 491, that is, the later part of the reign of Theodosius II and the reigns of Marcian, Leo and Zeno. This period was not only tumultuous but also pivotal to the political development of both the eastern and western parts of the Roman Empire.

The long reign of Theodosius II over the eastern part of the Roman Empire (408–50) saw a confirmation of the trajectory which had been set for it by Theodosius I. It was during this period that the self-interest and distinct identity of the East (later to be identified as 'Byzantine') were identified and consolidated. Constantinople/Byzantium was now established without challenge (except, increasingly ineffectually, in the ecclesiastical sphere) as the capital city of the East, the permanent home of the emperor, the bureaucracy and the government. In contrast with the West, civilian government, though sometimes challenged by the military, was the rule. Orthodox Christianity was the state religion (though the components of orthodoxy were

[8] See Blockley *FCH* I, 71–85, for the same reason as identified in n. 7.

hotly contested), while heretical and non-Christian beliefs (including the old Greco-Roman religions) placed their adherents increasingly at risk.

While the first part of Theodosius' reign was relatively placid, thanks especially to good relations with Persia maintained by a comparatively sophisticated diplomatic effort, after the death of the Persian king Yezdegerd I in 420, hostility and suspicion, leading at times to war, became the norm.

Unfortunately for the East Romans, this was the situation not only on the eastern frontier. Indeed, the most serious challenge came not from Persia but from the Hunnic kingdom of Rua and his sons and successors Bleda and Attila. The Hunnic kingdom (or, rather, a confederacy dominated by the Huns) had been consolidating itself and expanding north of the Danube since about 375. In 422 it launched a devastating invasion of Thrace, threatening Constantinople itself. The Romans were forced to buy peace with a treaty which, amongst other terms, promised a yearly payment of 350 lbs of gold, a humiliating concession since it could be represented as a tribute. The following three decades saw a succession of raids which devastated and depopulated the Balkans (a process that continued over subsequent centuries) and compelled the Romans to agree to treaties which were progressively harsher and more humiliating, until by 447 they were paying 2,100 lbs of gold each year and Attila was describing Theodosius as his tributary and slave.

The third major concern for the eastern government (although in this case the greatest and most immediate threat was to the West) came from Africa, where the Vandals under their king Gaiseric, having entered the region from Spain in 429, occupied Carthage in 439 and quickly began to assemble an effective naval power. In 440 the Vandals raided Sicily, and in response both parts of the Empire readied their naval and land forces. The attack was aborted because renewed Hunnic raids on the Balkans forced the withdrawal of the eastern forces.[9]

The brief reign of Theodosius' successor, Marcian (450–57), provided a period of respite for the East Romans. While Marcian was passive towards the Vandals and avoided hostilities with the Persians,

[9] For the external preoccupations of the regime of Theodosius II, see R.C. Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy: Formation and Conduct from Diocletian to Anastasius* (Leeds, 1992), 52–67.

he terminated payments to the Huns, a popular decision. Attila's response to this was to threaten war, but, in fact, he marched against the West. The death of Attila in 453 was followed by the break up of his vast kingdom and a relaxation of the coordinated pressure which he had been able to bring to bear upon the Romans. Nevertheless, as the former subject peoples of the Huns began to scatter and seek homelands for themselves, they visited continuous turmoil especially upon the Balkans, with which Marcian's regime had only begun to deal at the time of his death.[10]

Marcian's successor, Leo (457–74), was the creature of the then all-powerful general Aspar, who was himself disqualified from the office of emperor both by his barbarian origin and by his religion (he was an Arian Christian). Aspar and his son Ardaburius maintained their dominance over east Roman affairs until about 466, whereafter it declined until Leo was able to procure their assassination in 471.

The growth of the confidence of the Vandals, especially after their sack of Rome in 455 where they captured the family of the deceased emperor Valentinian III, led to intensified raiding in both the eastern and western Mediterranean. Leo's initial response to this was diplomatic, concentrating upon obtaining the release of Valentinian's family. But in 467–8, in concert with the western emperor Anthemius, he mounted an ambitious assault on Carthage by land and sea. The unexpected and costly failure of the naval attack, which was led by Leo's brother-in-law, Basiliscus, compromised the finances and political stability of the East and especially of the West and left the Vandals more firmly than ever entrenched in Africa.

On the eastern frontier relations with the Persians were bad, especially over Armenia (which the settlement under Theodosius I had failed to eliminate as an area of contention, especially in respect of the Christian Armenians under Persian control) and Lazica on the Black Sea, which had begun to emerge as a flashpoint late in Marcian's reign.

In the Balkans the main problems for Leo were posed by two groups of Ostrogoths, one settled in Pannonia under Theoderic the son of Theodemir (a member of the royal Amal family) and one living in Thrace led by Theoderic Strabo, who was a relative by mar-

[10] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 67–72.

riage of Aspar, whom Leo had assassinated in 471. Relations among Constantinople and these two groups oscillated between hostility and alliance, and the difficulties for Leo were compounded when in 473 the Pannonian Ostrogoths began to move eastwards, reaching Macedonia in the next year. The fluctuating relationship between the eastern emperor and these two groups of Ostrogoths, operating independently and close to Constantinople, was one of the defining motifs of the reign of Leo's successor, Zeno.[11]

Zeno, emperor from 474 to 491, was a chieftain from Isauria, a mountainous region in the south east of Asia Minor, whose rugged inhabitants had always maintained themselves in a state of semi-autonomy from Roman power. As son-in-law of Leo (who had sought to use the Isaurians to underwrite his position against his enemies, notably the supporters of Aspar) he took the throne after the reign of a few months of his own son, the six- or seven-year-old Leo II. The influx of Zeno's Isaurian supporters (and enemies) into Constantinople made him and the Isaurians hated by the population of the capital, who regarded them as nothing more than brigands. In consequence, political instability became the norm for the regime, as Zeno sought to balance off his many enemies through frequent changes in the high civil and military offices. Even so, for twenty months in 475–6 a revolt by Leo's brother-in-law, Basiliscus, forced him to flee the capital; and in 484 he needed all the support he could muster to defeat the revolt of another Isaurian, the *magister militum per Orientem*, Illus. Adding to Zeno's unpopularity, especially at Constantinople, was his adherence to Monophysitism, a form of Christian belief regarded as heretical by the majority of the populace of the capital.

After the débacle of the joint Roman attack on Carthage in 468, the Romans were in no condition to press the Vandals, who began again to raid the eastern Mediterranean in 474. But the old age and approaching death of their king, Gaiseric, counselled them to agree to an 'endless' treaty with the East Romans in 475, which they respected thereafter while continuing both to harass the West and, as Arians, to persecute the orthodox Christians of North Africa.

The eastern border was quiet, except for raiding by the Arab allies of both sides, since the Romans and the Persians were both preoccupied

[11] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 71–79.

elsewhere, the Persians with the Ephthalites on their north-eastern frontier and the Romans primarily in the Balkans.

With the entry of Theoderic the son of Theodemir into Macedonia in 474, Zeno was confronted by two Ostrogothic forces within reach of Constantinople, which might cooperate with each other and with his many enemies within the capital. Zeno's manoeuvres vis-à-vis the two Theoderics consumed much of his attention and resources until the accidental death of Theoderic Strabo in 481. Although Strabo's death led to the union of the two Ostrogothic forces, it also made it possible for Zeno to come to terms with the son of Theodemir, who was named ordinary consul for 484.

Zeno's alliance with Theoderic soon soured, and in 487 the latter attacked Constantinople, withdrawing only in exchange for a large sum of money. In order finally to remove the Ostrogoths from the Balkans, in the next year Zeno concluded a treaty with Theoderic under which he was commissioned to go to Italy and, if he defeated Odovacer (who, after deposing the emperor Romulus in 476, was its *de facto* ruler), he would rule on Zeno's behalf until the emperor himself should come. Theoderic entered Italy in 489 and, after his victory at the river Addua in 490, he was able to report success to Zeno and demand that his position be recognized. This was thwarted by the death of Zeno, whose successor, Anastasius, withheld recognition until 497.[12]

The *Histories* of Priscus and Malchus are Greek histories formed both by the classicizing tradition in which they were written and by the contemporary political history, primarily of the eastern Roman Empire. Although it can be hazarded that both works, especially that of Priscus, were, despite a rather limited readership, of considerable importance in shaping the narrative tradition of the period's political history, this remains no more than a hypothesis, since the highly fragmentary and focussed nature of what survives has the consequence that the shape of the complete *Histories* is not fully clear and the totality of their contents eludes us. Almost nothing, for instance, of the internal history of the period covered by Malchus survives amongst his fragments, while most of the available text deals with the manoeuvrings between Zeno and the two Theoderics. In the

[12] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 79–80.

case of Priscus, although the majority of the surviving material concerns relations between the East Romans and Attila, enough other material survives in various sources that we can construct a tentative picture of the scope of his *History*.

Most of the surviving text of Priscus' and Malchus' *Histories* is preserved in the *Excerpta de Legationibus*, a collection of passages on diplomatic activity, which were excerpted from classical and later historical works during the reign, and at the command, of the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus (913–59). The value of the *Excerpta* lies not only in the amount of material which they preserve, but also in the facts that they are mostly *verbatim* excerpts from the original texts (perhaps with a concluding or introductory phrase and the summarising of some long speeches) and that they usually preserve the correct ordering of the contents. Since the text tradition of the *Excerpta de Legationibus* is comparatively incorrupt, it is possible to approach the original text of the fragments and, therefore, to study with some confidence the stylistic characteristics of the authors.[13]

Beyond the fragments in the *Excerpta*, very little at all survives of Malchus' *History*: a brief summary by Photius; a few notices in the *Suda*; and two mentions by name, in Zonaras and a scholion to Evagrius' *Ecclesiastical History*, neither of which seems to reference material taken directly from Malchus.[14]

The situation in respect of Priscus' *History* is, however, wholly different. Priscus is frequently named in later works as an authority and a source of information, which perhaps reflects as much the fame of the author (and his main subject, Attila) as the status of his *History* as a direct source. Be that as it may, Priscan material, drawn directly or indirectly, appears in Jordanes' *Getica* (with some brief entrys in the *Romana*); John of Antioch; Procopius' *Wars*; Evagrius'

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[13] The only serious questioning of the order of the relevant passages of the *Exc. de Leg.* was by M. Errington, "Malchos von Philadelphia, Kaiser Zeno und die zwei Theoderiche", *Museum Helveticum* 40 (1983), 82–110, rejected by R.C. Blockley, "On the Ordering of the Fragments of Malchus' History," *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 9 (1984), 152f.

[14] In the conspectus of fragments (*FCH* I, 124–27) and in the text itself (*FCH* I, 405–54) the passages which I regarded as only probably or possibly from Malchus were placed in square brackets. No categorical statements about the historian or his work were made solely on the basis of these passages. Many of the articles in the *Suda* which have been traditionally ascribed to Malchus, I have placed in square brackets. Most of these passages, indeed, are certainly not from Malchus (see *FCH* I, 125).

Ecclesiastical History; Malalas; Theophanes; the *Paschal Chronicle*; Nicephorus Callistus' *Ecclesiastical History*; and the *Suda*. This material allows us to expand the known scope and contents of his *History*. It does not, however, usually permit the more detailed and profound study possible upon the fragments from the *Excerpta*.[15]

The title which Priscus gave to his *History* is not known. The *Excerpta de Legationibus* call it both "History" and "Gothic History", while the *Suda* calls it "History of Byzantium" and "events of the period of Attila". Of these four, the only plausible title, "History of Byzantium" incorporates a non-Priscan usage (Byzantium), while the terms "Gothic History" and "events of the period of Attila" are descriptions of only a part of the contents.

The *History* was published in eight books, either all together or in two instalments of four books each, the fourth book ending at the death of Theodosius II in 450. Since the eight books (omitting a hypothetical introductory summary) covered about forty years (ca. 434–ca. 474), it has been suggested that Priscus, proceeding annalistically, spread his material evenly at about five years to each book. It is clear, however, that although Priscus did use a structure that was basically annalistic, he did not hold himself rigidly to this structure and was prepared to devote more space to items which he considered to be of greater importance or interest or upon which he had more information. It is likely that the first four books dealt with events of only sixteen years while the second quartet covered twenty four, and that within the first four books the events surrounding Attila received more attention (hence the description in the *Suda*, "events of the period of Attila"). The treatment of the material in books 5 to 8 was probably more even and on a somewhat smaller scale, though events of great importance, such as Attila's attack on the West in 451–52, were described in an expanded and unified narrative.[16]

Malchus' work is called "Byzantine History" by both the *Excerpta de Legationibus* and Photius. It is probably the true title, since Malchus

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[15] See *FCH* I, 113–23 and II, 222–376. The convention noted at n. 14 was also applied to Priscus. Since most of the material relevant to the last part of the *History* (469–ca. 474) is categorized as probable/possible, less can with any certainty be said about that part. There has been a tendency to ascribe to Priscus much more material, especially from Jordanes, Procopius and John of Antioch, than can be verified by close examination.

[16] Blockley *FCH* I, 51.

concentrates on the history of the east Roman Empire, whose capital he always calls Byzantium, and he might have furnished his work with an introductory epitome from the reign of Constantine. The title and perhaps the epitome, also indicate, at a relatively early date, the primacy that Constantine's city had achieved in the affairs of the East by the time of Malchus' narrative. Whether it also points to an orientation of the *History* towards affairs in and around Constantinople (primarily in the Balkans and Asia Minor) is obscured by the very limited concentration of most of what survives upon relations between Zeno and the two Theoderics. If, however, what does survive is a fair reflection of what has been lost, then the point of view was definitely from the capital with an emphasis upon events and areas of interest to the capital. Thus, in addition to relations between Zeno and the Ostrogoths, the usurpation of Basiliscus, the revolt of Marcian, and relations with Illus and his supporters would have received ample treatment, while events of local importance, such as the fire at Constantinople in 476, would have found a place. That the viewpoint was Byzantine (if not merely narrowly Constantinopolitan) is indicated both by the statement of Photius that western events were inserted into the narrative[17] and by the surviving western fragments which show a concentration upon Italy and Africa, the two western regions of continuing interest to the East.

The version of Malchus' *History* which Photius saw was, as he himself says, incomplete both at the beginning and the end (the latter, he claims, the consequence of the author's death). The portion available to Photius covered seven years (474/4 to 480) in seven books, a neat coincidence of years and books which suggests a severely annalistic structure that used the reign year as the organizational basis. The material that preceded 473/4 would probably have been an introductory epitome beginning with the reign of Constantine (according to the *Suda*). If the *Suda* is correct that the *History* went to 491, the narrative between 480 and 491 would probably have been fairly full. Thus, it is possible that the original form of Malchus' *History* was: an introductory summary; a very detailed core of one year per book; and a final section fairly detailed but less so than the

[17] Cf. Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 78 I, p. 160 = *FCH* II, 402 line 18): Ταῦτα διεξίων διέξεισι καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ Ῥώμης κτλ, which suggests narrative inserts that interrupted the flow of the main narrative.

core. This kind of balance is found in other late histories, of Ammianus, Priscus and, perhaps, Eunapius.

The historiographical practice of Thucydides (and Polybius) laid down the rule that the author of a history ought to have been involved in at least some of the events which he describes, and, supplemented by Herodotus, it also indicated that the sources should, as far as possible, be eyewitnesses or very close to events. This tradition, which carried the implication that the core of the narrative should deal with contemporary or near-contemporary activity, informed the works of the classicizing historians. In the case of Malchus, his career as a sophist, probably at Constantinople, although it is unlikely to have led him to participate in important events, would, nevertheless, have given him access to persons of high rank and, through them, to information and informed commentary, the quality of which finds reflection in the quality of his narrative.

Priscus, on the other hand, though also a sophist (and rhetor), was involved in highly important affairs of state as advisor, first to the general Maximinus, then (perhaps very briefly) to the military governor of Alexandria, Florus, and finally (perhaps as *assessor*) to Euphemius, Marcian's master of the offices. Although there is no certain indication of the nature and quality of his sources, it can, therefore, be reasonably assumed that, beyond the events in which he participated, he also had access to information and commentary from officials of both low and high rank, as well as to documents, such as treaties and official correspondence, and published material, such as speeches, pamphlets and political poems. Indeed, the balance of material in the surviving fragments of Priscus' *History* (especially the contrast between the full accounts of dealings between the Huns and the East Romans, on the one hand, and, on the other, the sparser descriptions of events in the West) suggests that the relative fullness of the narrative was greatly influenced by the interest of both the historian and his sources.

In addition to direct references to texts and their authors which provide a link to the classical tradition in general, the classicizing historians used a number of conventions to associate themselves with the classical tradition of historiography as defined by the practices of Thucydides and Herodotus (and Polybius) and thereby to advertise the high seriousness of their endeavours. These conventions reside primarily in stylistic and linguistic usage, introduction of speeches and digressions, and treatment of religious affairs.

Classical references take two forms: direct quotation, and the importation of details from a classical text into the presentation or interpretation of the event or events under discussion. The former practice, found, for instance, in Eunapius of Sardis (and the Latin-writing Greek historian, Ammianus), does not appear in the fragments of Priscus and Malchus. The second, while not found in Malchus, plays a significant role in Priscus' narrative construction. His account of the siege of Naissus by the Huns in 441/2 is clearly based upon Thucydides' classic account of the siege of Plataea by the Spartans, to the extent that the historicity of the siege of Naissus (as well as the details in the account) has been doubted.[18] Again, three Herodotean passages clearly form the bases of three sections of Priscus' surviving narrative: the discovery of the sacred sword of the Huns, based upon Herodotus' account of the worship of the sword of Ares by the Scythians; the explanation of a series of tribal movements from the Eurasian steppes, based upon Herodotus' account of gryphons; and a trick by the Persian king Peroz which led to a Persian-Kidarite war, based upon Herodotus' account of a trick which the Egyptian ruler, Amasis, played on the Persian king, Cambyses.[19] In all three cases, while the historicity of the fundamental item—the Hunnic sacred sword, the tribal movements, and the Persian-Kidarite war—is not in doubt, the architecture and details, as well as the explanations, of the accounts are rendered untrustworthy. Although this practice could be defended by the observation that all three passages involve events beyond the Roman frontier (and, implicitly, beyond detailed Roman knowledge) and not part of the core narrative, the same defence cannot be offered for the account of the siege of Naissus. This suggests that there are important (and, unfortunately, indeterminate) limitations upon the trustworthiness of Priscus, at least when his stylistic impulse to classical association intrudes.

The most pervasive influence of the classical tradition upon the late historians was in the structure of their language, both syntax and vocabulary. The extent and nature of this influence and its

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[18] E.A. Thompson, "Priscus of Panium, Fragment 1b," *Classical Quarterly* 39 (1945), 92–94. I am now not as comprehensive in my rejection of Thompson's arguments as I was in "Dexippus and Priscus and the Thucydidean Account of the Siege of Plataea," *Phoenix* 26 (1972), 22–26. We can conclude little from Priscus' account other than that Naissus fell to the Huns, a fact that is confirmed elsewhere.

[19] The relevant passages are: Priscus frr. 12 (sacred sword); 40, 2 (gryphons); 41, 3 (trick of Peroz).

consequence for the evaluation of the style have been more thoroughly discussed in respect of the Latin-writing Ammianus than the Greek historians. The style of Priscus and Malchus is generally straightforward and clear, though both writers, especially Priscus, make use of figures and syntax long absent from contemporary speech. While Priscus' main models were Herodotus and Thucydides, Malchus in addition, according to the *Suda*, introduced tragic diction. The *Suda* also says, however, that Malchus' style was clear, a virtue evidenced in the surviving fragments.[20]

The most obvious classical elements in the late historians appear in the vocabulary and the quantitative indicators (numbers, time, distance). In the terminology of office-holding Priscus avoids most of the contemporary Latinisms (except *quaestor, magister*, *comes*, and *patricius*, all in Greek transcription), preferring either the Greek equivalent or a circumlocution, the latter sometimes leading to ambiguity. In naming peoples and places Priscus consistently prefers the Greek form, although varying between contemporary and classical usages. Attempts to argue for a degree of precision in Priscus' terminology have foundered on the manifest inconsistencies and vaguenesses that exist in the text. As far as one can see, precision is never more than local, that is, imposed by the need for clarity in a particular account of events.[21]

Malchus, in contrast to Priscus, is more ready to introduce Latinisms (again, in Greek transcription), sometimes in pure form, sometimes mixed, and sometimes with glosses. But Greek forms do predominate, occasionally at the cost of clarity. In naming peoples and places Malchus avoids the prevalent classicism of Priscus and others, preferring contemporary usages.[22]

One of the elements of classicism that the late historians affected was the avoidance of the kind of detail which numbers represented. Thus, military logistics, which are of central interest to a modern historian writing the kind of military narrative that played such a large part in the late histories, were generally avoided. Malchus, in this respect, as often, deviating from the norm, does appear to have assigned some importance to numbers (to judge by the frequency of logistics in the surviving fragments). In Priscus, however, numbers

[20] *FCH* I, 54 (Priscus); 74 (Malchus).
[21] *FCH* I, 52f.
[22] *FCH* I, 74f.

appear to have played little part in the historical discourse; and even when they are present—for instance, the number of fugitives or pounds of gold registered in negotiations and treaties—, they seem to reflect little more than the writer's personal and very circumscribed interest. This general lack of concern for precision in these matters comes together in Priscus' account of his journey on the Roman embassy to Attila's court, where the absence of satisfactory and consistent time-indicators, distances and topographical detail thwarts any attempt to reconstitute the journey and locate Attila's camp.[23]

One of the ways in which the late historians invited comparison with their classical models, especially Herodotus, (as well as providing diversions for their audience) was through the insertion of interesting, often exotic, material that was peripheral to, if often supportive of, the main narrative theme. These digressions were formally marked by some authors (most systematically by Ammianus) and could cover a range of topics, most often foreign places, peoples and customs, but also any theme, especially antiquarian, that diverged from the thread of the narrative. No trace of a digression survives amongst Malchus' fragments, while those in Priscus are not formally marked, are relatively brief and are most often concerned with the Huns: trouble amongst the Akatiri (Hunnic subjects); a Roman-style stone bath built at the order of a Hunnic noble; Kreka, a wife of Attila; and a feast given by Attila. There survives in addition a short notice on Charybdis, which suggests that the full *History* might have offered a greater variety of digressions.[24]

One of the distinguishing characteristics of late classicizing historiography, as of classical historiography itself, was the incorporation of formal and elaborately-constructed speeches into the narrative. The forms vary: direct, indirect and mixed. They might be short or long, although most historians (rhetors and sophists by training and sometimes profession) introduced a number of long and elaborate ones, often in pairs which, after the manner of the rhetorical exercises,

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[23] Attempts have been made, most heroically by R. Browning, "Where was Attila's Camp?" *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 73 (1953), 143–45.

[24] Fr. 11, 2 lines 243–58 (Akatiri); ibid. lines 364–72 (stone bath); ibid. lines 547–62 (Kreka); 13, 1 lines 19–83 (Attila's feast). Since these all come from a coherent and relatively continuous passage, one can see clearly how Priscus has integrated these details smoothly into his narrative. The note on Charybdis, from *Suda* X 144, is placed as fr. 31, 2 following Müller, though its location is not secure.

laid out a set of contrasting arguments. The speeches—at least the longer ones—not only provided a showcase for the writer's talents (and, presumably, pleased the audience) but also elaborated a commentary upon the events of the narrative in which they were set. In this context arises the rather inconclusive debate over the 'authenticity' of these speeches: whether they replicate speeches actually delivered at the time or whether they are artefacts of the historian, perhaps or perhaps not representing an original, but in content setting out what in the writer's view might or should have been said under the circumstances.

The fragments of both Malchus and Priscus preserve a number of speeches (or parts of speeches) of varying length, which demonstrate their importance in both *Histories*. From each *History* there survive sets which illustrate their use and the care and talent lavished upon them. The Malchan set (probably condensed by the compilers of the *Excerpta* but the arguments intact) consists of one by Theoderic the son of Theodemir, a response by the Roman envoy Adamantius, a second speech by Theoderic, and a brief reply by Adamantius.[25] Adamantius had been sent by Zeno to remonstrate with Theoderic over his making peace with Theoberic Strabo and his surprise capture of Epidamnus. Theoderic in his opening speech justifies his actions by complaining that the Romans had not fulfilled their commitments to him, leaving him with no choice but to make peace with Strabo, a complaint which Malchus seconds with a direct comment.[26] Adamantius attempts to deflect the complaints by enumerating the benefits conferred upon Theoderic by the Romans and by advising him to remove to Dardania, where there was good land; to which Theoderic replies that if he were given the honours bestowed upon Strabo, he would move in the Spring. Adamantius concludes the exchange by saying that he has no mandate to agree to this.

The evasiveness of Adamantius, to whom Malchus is usually sympathetic, and the reasonableness of Theoderic leave no doubt where the historian's sympathies lie in this exchange. The function of the speeches appears to have been twofold: to represent a transaction that actually took place and to illustrate a particular characteristic of Zeno's regime, its untrustworthiness. The rather modest functions

[25] Malch. fr. 20 lines 171–225.
[26] Ibid. line 191.

assigned to these speeches and their unpretentious execution enable them to be integrated very successfully and persuasively into the narrative.

A useful comparison and contrast are provided by the matched speeches that survive from Priscus' *History*, the famous exchange between the historian and a Greek former captive in the camp of Attila.[27] The philosophical and sweeping nature of this debate is pointed up in the introductory phrase, "as I was waiting", which, as an obvious reminiscence of Plato's *Phaedo*, also positions Priscus as the philosopher in the exchange.[28] The Greek speaks first, detailing the events which brought him from a life as a merchant in the Roman Empire to captivity amongst the Huns to his present status as an honoured companion of a Hunnic noble. This lays the ground for a list of complaints against contemporary corruption, cowardice, insecurity and injustice within the Roman Empire, all contrasted with the self-sufficiency, security and happiness amongst the Huns. Priscus grounds his response upon the Platonic ideal of the state, emphasizing the division of responsibility amongst the parts of the population of the Empire and the idealized functions of the various component activities—taxation, justice, slavery—, while avoiding countering the specific charges. The Greek then weakly concedes the force of Priscus' arguments, while bringing out what is implicit in Priscus' exposition: that the Roman constitution is good but that those in power are undermining the constitution and ruining the state.

The response of Priscus to the criticisms of the Greek has been judged both feeble and complacent.[29] This may be the result of inept condensation by the excerptor of the text, who omitted the theoretical observations of the Greek and the specific refutations of Priscus. It is, however, more likely that the speeches were composed as a complementary pair, that of the Greek laying out the specific criticisms (which are found elsewhere in Priscus' text and in other sources), that of Priscus sketching, under the guise of a response, the ideal of the Roman state which only adds point to the Greek's unchallenged assertions. If this is so, then the Thucydidean use of the speech as a tool of analysis has been adapted as a technique for the criticism of the late imperial autocracy through the placing of the condem-

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[27] Pris. fr. 11, lines 407–510.
[28] Ibid. line 407: διατρίβοντι δέ μοι = Plato, *Phaed.* 227a.
[29] See E.A. Thompson, *A History of Attila and the Huns*, Oxford (1948), 184–87.

nation in the mouths of those who would have been expected to be hostile to the authorities. This device, which is used by, for example, Procopius, would have been congenial to Priscus, who prefers to avoid direct authorial comment. Certainly, it is clear that, whatever exchange took place between Priscus and the Greek (if it took place at all), it would have been very unlike the self-conscious artefact in the text.

One of the most prominent characteristics of late classicizing historiography is the reserve with which it treated Christianity, the dominant religion of the late imperial period. The only clear exceptions to this generalization lie at both ends of the period, the paganism of Eunapius of Sardis which at the turn of the fourth and fifth centuries attributed the troubles of the Roman state to its new set of beliefs, and the thoroughgoing Christianity of Theophylactus who in the seventh century wrote a secular history of the Christian Empire. The intervening histories, although in detail they take different approaches towards Christianity, all prescribe a secular approach that largely eschews Christianity and Christian explanations and, while introducing certain common terms which combine a classical form with a contemporary meaning, prefers a terminology that tends towards anachronism.[30]

Both Priscus and Malchus in the vocabulary they use when writing of things Christian conform to the intermediate usage of the fifth and sixth centuries. Thus, Malchus uses the contemporary ἐπίσκοπος alongside the classical ἱερεύς and ἀρχιερεύς, as well as the explanatory phrase ἱερέα ὃν οἱ Χριστιανόι καλοῦσι πρεσβύτερον; while Priscus, amongst whose fragments far fewer direct references to Christianity and Christians survive, tends to prefer contemporary but classicizing usages together with some circumlocutory references.[31] In neither author do religious matters (Christian or other) intrude largely into the narrative, and where they, and especially Christian matters, do appear, they have a relevance for the historical explanation. So, for instance, in Priscus (fr. 44), when the Lazic king Gobazes wins over the emperor Leo, from whom he had become estranged, τῇ τε

[30] See Cameron and Cameron, "Christianity and Tradition" (at n. 6). As might be expected, the range of acceptable terminology expands throughout the fifth and sixth centuries.

[31] Malch. frr. 1 lines 20 and 3; 20 lines 18 and 138–39, respectively. Prisc. frr. 6, 1 line 6 (ἐπίσκοπος); 31, 1 lines 10 (αἵρεσίς) and 10–11 (ἡ τῶν Χριστιανῶν θρησκεία); 44 line 6 (τὰ τῶν Χριστιανῶν σύμβολα).

θωπεία τῶν λόγων καὶ τὰ τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἐπιφερόμενος σύμβολα he does so in a nice marriage of Platonic phraseology (*Laws* 906b) and Christian action: ("through his conciliatory words and by carrying with him the symbols of the Christians").[32] More typical, however, are the omissions, as, for instance, when Malchus, in describing the treaty which Zeno made in 475 with Gaiseric, fails to note that the Vandal king agreed to permit the return of the Catholic clergy to Africa.[33]

Such reserve cannot be used to argue for the paganism of either Priscus or Malchus; nor can references to demons or other pagan paraphernalia, a subject of equal interest to authors who were indubitably Christian, be turned to the same end.[34] In the case of Priscus, while the weight of scholarly opinion has inclined towards his paganism, there is no clear evidence either way. In the case of Malchus, while the statement of Photius that "in his beliefs he was not outside the religion of the Christians" appears to argue for his Christianity, the perception of a certain tentativeness in Photius' phraseology has permitted a degree of doubt.[35] Indeed, the ambiguity of these historians, both in the eyes of modern scholars and in the way in which they have shaped their own texts, reflects the ambiguous position of the elitist and secularist form of their historical discourse in a world which was becoming increasingly dominated by polarized religious enthusiasms and a culture which, as it became more demotic, was also becoming more disengaged from its classical past.

The historical focus of Priscus and Malchus was quintessentially classical, that is, politics and war and the significant internal and external affairs of the state which were conducted by these means. In their works, as in other late classicizing histories, the important increment to these activities was the expanded role of diplomacy, a

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[32] The reserve here is in marked contrast with the version of the same visit in the *Life of Daniel the Stylite* in *Anal. Boll.* 32 (1913), 169f., where the Christian element, reflected in the role assigned to Daniel in the reconciling of Gobazes and Leo, is paramount. A disproportionate number of Christian references appears in those fragments which can be assigned only probably/possibly to Priscus and Malchus.

[33] Fr. 5. The information is in Victor of Vita, *Hist. Persec. Afric. Prov.* 1, 17, 51.

[34] Prisc. fr. 42, on the fire at Constantinople in 465 which is said possibly to have been started by an evil demon, is preserved by Evagrius *HE* 2, 13 and Ni. Call. *HE* 15, 21. Prisc. fr. 46,2, attributing to sorcery an illness suffered by the western emperor Anthemius, is preserved in Joh. Ant. fr. 207. Neither passage is certainly Priscan.

[35] Phot. *Bibl. cod.* I p. 161 (= *FCH* II, 404 lines 33f.) :καὶ τὴν θρησκείαν οὐκ ἐξω τοῦ Χριστιανικοῦ θειασμοῦ.

subsidiary activity in the classical period, but in the late Empire of increasing importance in the maintenance of relations between the Romans and outside powers.[36] The important omission was, as has been noted, ecclesiastical activity, which not only played a central role in the determination and conduct of many affairs of state, but had even begun to supplant the state apparatus in the conduct of local affairs and in the regulation of relations between the centre and the provinces. Indeed, when Christian bishops and priests appear in the histories, their role is often that of emissaries, not of the Church itself but of the civilian populations with which they were connected.[37]

Another significant change was in the conception of insider/outsider, whose classical polarity had been eroded by the progressive Romanization of peripheral peoples. To the Greeks and Romans of their classical periods the conception of insider/outsider rested essentially upon cultural foundations. The Roman Empire consolidated this conception through the establishment of static and well-defended borders, which added a territorial dimension; client kingdoms, which occupied an ambiguous position in this scheme, tended to be eliminated by absorption. In the fifth century, however, the clarity and neatness of this scheme had been effaced by the collapse of the borders, the permeability to new peoples of what remained (especially in Europe), and the shifting constellation of relationships between, on the one hand, what still identified itself as the Roman state and, on the other, a variety of peoples and powers, some stable, like the Persian Kingdom, some unstable, like the Huns and the Ostrogoths. These peoples often declined to accept the traditional terms of a relationship as set out by the Romans, preferring, if possible, to define their own.

This new world can be illustrated by a small selection from a large number of examples: a Vandal son-in-law of the emperor Theodosius I; another emperor, Theodosius II, of part Frankish descent; a Persian king calling himself the brother (and perhaps in one instance acting as the legal guardian) of the Roman emperor.[38] In the pages of Priscus and Malchus there are similar examples: a Hun king who

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[36] See the summary conclusion in Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy* (at n. 9), 165–68.

[37] E.g. Prisc. fr. 31, 1; Malch. frr. 1; 20 lines 137–39.

[38] Stilicho, a half or full Vandal married to Serena, the adopted daughter of

treats the Roman emperor as his tributary; the hated brigand race of Isaurians wielding power at Constantinople; an Ostrogothic king as Roman consul ordinary.[39] The new world is also reflected in the narrowing perspective of these historians, one that comprehends primarily the eastern Empire and its priorities (the south-east Balkans, Asia Minor, northern Mesopotamia and the Black Sea littoral); that becomes more Constantinopolitan (especially in Malchus); that retreats from the West, with the exceptions of those parts, Africa and Italy (including Sicily), which remained of strategic importance to the East. Indeed, the conception of the Western Roman Empire, although it is still used, begins to fragment into its constituent parts—Africans, Italians, and so forth[40]—while the further reaches—Britain, northern Gaul, northern Spain and western Africa—become an unknown world into which the fabulous re-enters.[41] In this environment external relations (and diplomacy) expand to cover much of the interests and activity of the Roman state to the point that barbarian leaders such as Attila and the two Theoderics come to dominate the histories.

In the classical tradition historical explanation has a primarily moralizing basis. Hence the historians' narratives are dominated by a small cast of powerful personalities whose characters, as the wellsprings of action, are categorized as good or evil; and the explanations that depend upon these characters tend to be absolute and lacking in subtlety. The weaknesses of this approach are most obvious in Priscus, whose narrative is structured around the activities of a few very vividly-drawn personalities: the proud, warlike and wise Attila; the weak and cowardly Theodosius II; the greedy and manipulative eunuch, Chrysaphius; the noble and frugal Marcian; to whom would probably have been added, if the full text had survived, Leo and Gaiseric. In this arena of clashing virtues and vices there is little room for an acknowledgement of the kind of strategic, logistical and economic problems with which, for instance, Theodosius II and his

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Theodosius I. The mother of Theodosius II was Eodoxia, the daughter of a Frankish father and a Roman mother (PLRE II "Eudoxia" 1). For the relationship between the Persian king and the Roman emperor see Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 51f. (with bibliography).

[39] Prisc. fr. 15, 29 (Theodosius II as Attila's slave and tributary); Malch. fr. 22 (hatred of the Isaurians); Malch. fr. 20 line 187 (Theoderic as consul and patrician).

[40] Ἄφροι (Prisc. fr. 53, 1); Ἰταλοί (Prisc. fr. 41, 1 and Malch. fr. 14); Ἰταλιῶται (Prisc. fr. 39, 1) οἱ ἑσπέροι Ῥωμαῖοι (Prisc. ibid.).

[41] E.g. Prisc. fr. 40, 1.

advisors would have had to wrestle when deciding how best to deal with Attila, Gaiseric and other contemporary enemies.[42]

In the surviving fragments of Malchus' *History* we can discern the importance of the emperors Leo and Zeno and of the two Theoderics, and we can speculate that in the complete work Verina, Basiliscus, Illus and probably Gaiseric would also have played prominent roles. In Malchus the conventional approach and its weaknesses are illustrated in the treatment of Zeno and his dealings with the two Theoderics. While the development of the overall narrative and its components are set out in a clear and rational manner, the fundamental explanation of the whole series of events is grounded on Zeno's character as a cowardly and weak ruler, whose vacillations made him an unreliable ally and an unpredictable enemy.[43] No doubt his relations with Basiliscus were treated in a similar manner.

Malchus has perhaps been fortunate in what has survived from his *History*, since the major narrative (frag. 18) shows him as a writer capable of producing a clear concise and well-ordered account apparently based on good sources. Priscus, in contrast, better illustrates the failings of classicizing historiography in the late period: vagueness, lack of interest in detail, over moralizing, poor strategic analysis, and weak causation. The complete histories, had they been available to us, might have rebalanced somewhat this picture. Neither Priscus nor Malchus, however, appears to have been able to transcend the limitations of the genre and to produce a work of independent historiographical value, as had Ammianus in the fourth century and would Procopius in the sixth.

Candidus

Almost all that is known about Candidus the Isaurian and his *History* comes from the inventory of his work in Photius' *Bibliotheca* (*cod.* 79, I, pp. 161–66).[44] From this it is clear that, whatever its merits, which according to Photius were not great, Candidus' *History* cannot be categorized as one written within the classicizing tradition. It appears,

[42] Prisc. fr. 10 gives some recognition of the difficulties which Theodosius II faced when dealing with a large number of enemy peoples at the same time.

[43] Esp. Malch. frr. 18, 3 lines 42–48; 20 lines 174–80.

[44] The only other material certainly from Candidus is *Suda* X 245. A number of articles in the *Suda* have been ascribed to Candidus or Malchus. Most are certainly

indeed, that while this work, whose title has not been recorded, was not a national (Isaurian) history as such, it was a history of those reigns, of Leo and Zeno, that witnessed the Isaurians in power at Constantinople, and it was written from an Isaurian standpoint with a very heavy emphasis on events in and around Constantinople.

Candidus was an Isaurian by birth and, since he had acted as secretary to some Isaurian magnates, was well placed to record the events of the period which he chose to cover. This period was the reigns of Leo, who introduced the Isaurians into Constantinopolitan and East Roman politics, and Zeno, who was himself Isaurian and relied on Isaurian support, that is, from 457 to the proclamation of the anti-Isaurian Anastasius in 491. Although Candidus' position would probably have given his access to good information—and the only non-Photian material, a short passage from the *Suda* (X245), gives official-looking figures for the cost of Leo's attack upon the Vandals in 468—Photius seems to indicate that his narrative was an uneven confection of disparate elements.[45] The organization of the material appears to have been annalistic, although no time-indicators beyond the beginnings and ends of reigns survive.

Photius' condemnation of Candidus' style of writing is comprehensive and points clearly to an author who could or did not aspire to classical elevation:

> He does not have a style appropriate for history. He uses poetic vocabulary in a tasteless and immature manner, and his forays into compound sentences are cruder and harsher-sounding than when he falls back into his looser and dissonant style of writing. He also innovates with his syntax, which, however, does not contribute to charm and elegance in his writing, but makes it harsh and unpleasant to the ear.[46]

Photius states clearly that Candidus was an orthodox Christian, and there are indications that in his *History* he brandished his religion to a degree unacceptable to the norms of late classicizing historiography. For instance, in a digression on the Isaurians (the only one identified in the *History*), which is placed at the coronation of Zeno by his young son Leo II and which apparently attempts to offer some

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not from Malchus, although they cannot with any certainty be ascribed to Candidus. See also the remarks on Eustathius of Epiphania at n. 2.

[45] Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 79 I, p. 161 (= *FCH* II, 464 lines 22–23): συμμιγῆ τὴν ἱστορίαν καὶ ἐξ ἀνομοιοτάτων ἁρμόζων ἁλίσκεται.

[46] My translation of Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 79 I, p. 161 (= *FCH* II, 464).

legitimacy to Zeno's ascent to the throne, Candidus claims that the Isaurians were the descendants of the biblical Esau, from whom they took their name. Again, the replacement of the monophysite bishop of Antioch, Peter the Fuller, by Calandion in 481 is noted, as is the consecration of Marcian as a priest (using the technical term πρεσβύτερος) after the failure of his revolt against Zeno in 479.[47]

As far as one can tell from the sketchy and unsympathetic summary of Photius, Candidus' *History* was primarily an account of the plots and counter-plots and related manoeuvres which swirled around the court during the reigns of Leo and Zeno. There was apparently little interest in events outside Constantinople and its Asia Minor hinterland; and the only forays beyond this area which Photius notes are the replacement of Peter the Fuller as bishop of Antioch, the replacement of Nepos by Romulus as western emperor, and later the refusal of the Gauls to accept the overlordship of Odovacer. Of these three items, the first, involving the bishopric of the second city of the East, was of interest to Constantinople; the second could well have been occasioned by Zeno's interest in Nepos; and the third appears in the context of embassies from both the Gauls and Odovacer to Zeno at Constantinople.

A clearer indication, perhaps, of the very restricted scope of Candidus' *History* is the fact that, of the two Theoderics who bulk so large in Malchus' *History* as protagonists with Zeno, the son of Theodemir is never mentioned, while Theoderic Strabo only appears as giving refuge to Marcian's brother, Procopius, after the failure of the revolt of 479. It seems most unlikely, therefore, that in the quality of style and organization, in the sweep and depth of the narrative, or in the seriousness and scope of the analysis, Candidus' *History* would merit comparison with those of Priscus and Malchus.

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[47] Both Peter the Fuller and (later) the pagan philosopher Pamprepius are called δνσσεβῆς. It is not clear whether this term originated with Candidus or with Photius.

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CHAPTER TEN

LATIN HISTORIOGRAPHY: JEROME, OROSIUS AND THE WESTERN CHRONICLES

G. Zecchini

1. *Introduction: Jerome*

By the beginning of the fifth century Latin historiography is almost exclusively Christian. The first historical work of the century are the *Chronica* of Sulpicius Severus (403), and after this there develop two different approaches to the writing of history. The first is that of the chronicle, which goes down to Hydatius and beyond, the second, which alone can be called historiography in the strict sense, culminates in Orosius and is practically limited to Africa.[1] The origin of both these approaches is to be found in the historical writings of Jerome, both in what he wrote and in what he planned to write, and thus it is convenient to start with him, twenty years before the fifth century.

When Jerome wrote and published his *Chronicon* in 380,[2] he had just returned from the cultural and intellectual climate of Rome, when Damasus was pope (366–384). Damasus planned a new specifically Christian interpretation of history, not hostile to the pagan version, but parallel and alternative to it. Evidence of this is provided by the *epigrammata Damasiana*, eulogies of Christian martyrs, which are to Church history what Augustan eulogies of the Forum are to the history of Rome. To this trend also belong the Latin translations of the *Jewish War* of Josephus by the pseudo-Hegesippus, who was perhaps the converted Jew Isaac, and of the *Life of Antony* (Athanasius' authorship has now become uncertain) translated by Euagrius of Antioch. It was also thought necessary to bring up to

[1] Here belong also the Gallo-Romans Sulpicius Alexander and Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus: cf. infra § 4.

[2] Thus F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1922), I, 63–69.

date the Latin version of the *Chronicon* of Hippolytus, which had been continued to 334 and was incorporated in the work of the so-called Chronographer of 354.[3]

Jerome involved himself in this task after he went to the East in 373 and came across the *Chronicon* of Eusebius, which was decidedly superior to that of Hippolytus. It was not, however, merely a matter of translation. Jerome added to Eusebius details of Roman history and culture, mainly deriving from Suetonius, and then continued Eusebius from 326 to the battle of Adrianople in 378. For this continuation Jerome used, in addition to personal recollections, several written sources. One was certainly Eutropius, another may have been Aurelius Victor; the tradition contained in the *Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte* is also a possibility, and the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* in the recension of 370[4] was almost certainly consulted. Thus, on the one hand Jerome maintained the chronicle method, which up to that time had been the Christian method *par excellence*, and, on the other, went beyond it with his secular annotations, both in cultural and political terms which he drew without prejudice on the pagan sources.

Eusebius-Jerome was the model for the whole of western chronography from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages proper, precisely because it was not a bare chronicle of religious and ecclesiastical events. Its schematic arrangement offered a fairly accurate and complete account of human history from Abraham onwards.

In the preface to the *Chronicon*, however, which was written when he had finished the work, Jerome showed that he was aware of the limits of this type of chronography, even in the new guise that he had given it. Indeed, he recognized that contemporary history, the history of the barbarian invasions after 378, would need to be treated *latioris historiae stilo*, with a more ample exposition and in grander prose. Here is the project for a work in the classical historiographical tradition, which aims at bridging the gap between pagan and Christian historiography: Christians, too, can and should write about contemporary history, the dramatic vicissitudes of the Empire, which is now their Empire.

From 380 to 390 Jerome wavered between this project and another

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[3] Here summarized G. Zecchini, *Ricerche di storiografia latina tardoantica* (Rome, 1993), 16–23.

[4] R.W. Burgess, "Jerome and the KG", *Historia* 44 (1995), 349–369.

of a great history of the Church,[5] but it is not known what relation this would have borne to that of Eusebius, which was the model. Rufinus of Aquileia took up this latter project in 402 and executed it by translating and continuing Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Jerome, however, was distracted by other matters and did not finalize either project, but in his exegetical works of the first decade of the fifth century he embodied some important reflections on history, a subject that evidently continued to fascinate him. In his *Commentary on Zechariah* of 406 the reason for the deaths from putrefaction sent by God to the great persecutors (Decius, Valerian, Diocletian, Galerius, Maximinus Daia, Julian) is taken from the *De mortibus persecutorum* of Lactantius, as is the number of the persecutions (six as opposed to the ten of Eusebius), in his *Commentary on Daniel* of 407 he reaffirms that the dominion of Rome, the ultimate goal of the *translatio imperii*, shall end only when the world ends (*in consummatione mundi, quando regnum destruendum est Romanorum*), in his *Commentary on Isaiah* of 408/9 he sets the figure of Augustus besides that of Christ and attributes to him the providential significance of the ruler chosen by God to inaugurate an era of peace and to prepare the world to receive the incarnation of His only begotten Son: the so-called *Augustustheologie*, which had already appeared in a fragment of the *Apologia* of Melito of Sardis, written in the second half of the second century and cited by Eusebius (*HE* 4, 26), is now reformulated definitively.[6]

Thus, there was a need for a contemporary history to be written *latioris historiae stilo*, and Orosius took up the challenge. His visit to Bethlehem in 415 was significant for the passing of Jerome's mantle to him and for the transmission of certain key concepts, such as those of the *translatio imperii* and of the *Augustustheologie*.

2. *Orosius*

Paulus Orosius was born in Galicia in north-western Spain between 375 and 380.[7] He was a contemporary of Theodosius I (379–395),

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[5] Hieron. *Vita Malchi* 1.

[6] *Comment. in Zachar.* 3,14,12; *in Daniel.* 2,7,7a and 8; *in Esaiam* 1,2,4. In general cf. F.X. Murphy, "Jerome as an historian" in *A Monument to St. Jerome* (New York), 115–141; K. Sugano, *Das Rombild des Hieronymus* (Frankfurt, 1983); Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 25–27.

[7] On Orosius see B. Lacroix, *Orose et ses idées* (Paris, 1965); E. Corsini, *Introduzione*

the founder of the last dynasty of imperial Rome, and his youth was spent in the last golden age of Empire. In 409, while the Church in the West was distracted by the Pelagian and Priscillianist heresies, the Vandals, Alans, and Sueves crossed the Pyrenees to invade Spain, thus shattering the illusion that Spain was safe from the barbarian migrations.

The next year, in 410, Rome was taken and sacked for three days by Alaric's Visigoths. The pagan intellectuals that survived ascribed the cause of the disaster to the anger of the ancient gods at their replacement by the false god of the Christians. It was as a result of these polemical accusations that Augustine decided to write the *De civitate Dei*. Meanwhile, Orosius, now a priest, decided to leave Spain, which was racked and ravaged by the barbarians, and went to Africa. There he presented Augustine with his first anti-heretical work, the *Commonitorium de errore Priscillianistarum et Origenistarum*. In 415 he was sent to the East, where he met Jerome and took part in the synod of Jerusalem, at the end of that year he wrote the *Liber apologeticus adversus Pelagianos*.

When he returned to Africa, Augustine commissioned him to write an historical work to complement his own *De civitate Dei*, of which he just finished the first ten books. Orosius executed the task with amazing speed; in just two years, 417 and 418, he wrote the *Historiae adversus paganos*, which is a masterpiece of Christian Latin historiography. Nothing is known of the rest of his life or of his death.

Orosius' *Historiae* constitute a universal history from Adam (*ab Adam primo homine*) down to 417, i.e. to the political chronicle of his own day. They are in seven books: the first goes down to the foundation of Rome, the second to the sack of Rome by the Gauls in 386 B.C., the third to the battle of Sentinum in 295 B.C. and to the contemporaneous wars of Alexander's successors, the fourth to the fall of Carthage in 146 B.C., the fifth to the post-Sullan period, dealing with Sertorius and Spartacus, the sixth to the Incarnation, while the seventh deals with the entire imperial period. At the beginning of book one, after the prologue, there is a very long chapter of 106

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alle 'Storie' di Orosio (Torino, 1968) (most important); A. Lippold, *Orosio. Le Storie contro i pagani* (Milan-Verona, 1976) (fundamental); F. Fabbrini, *Paolo Orosio. Uno storico* (Rome, 1979) (eccentric); H.W. Götz, *Die Geschichtstheologie des Orosius* (Darmstadt, 1980); J. Vilella, "Biografía crítica de Orosio", *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 43 (2000), 94–121.

paragraphs, which is a geographical introduction to the historical narration that follows.[8]

The fact that Orosius decided to write the *Historiae* in several books, with a mainly political content based on secular and pagan sources, and in a highly rhetorical, mannered, and complex style, reveals his desire to overcome the narrow limits of Christian chronography and return to the grand tradition of classical historiography, as Jerome had recommended in the preface to his *Chronicon*. Such a decision to write a universal history goes beyond both the Christian and the Roman tradition. The former began its chronography with Abraham and marginalized Greek and republican Roman history so as to follow its scheme of the succession of empires (Assyria, merging King Ninus and Abraham, Persia, Macedon down to the Ptolemies of Egypt, Rome from Caesar—Caesar being considered as the first emperor—onwards), the latter began *ab urbe condita* and dealt exclusively with Rome, whose conquest of the world necessarily involved the history of her subject peoples.

In such a universalistic approach Orosius had a sole Latin predecessor in Pompeius Trogus.[9] Trogus' concept of a universal history comprising Rome was in opposition to the universalism of Augustus and Livy, for whom Rome absorbed in herself all the historical vicissitudes of humankind and was the sum of all. As shall be shown, such a polemic is lacking in Orosius. Yet Trogus and his epitome made by Justinus, perhaps in the fourth century,[10] is Orosius' source for the history of the Near East and Greece. For the history of Rome from the foundation to Augustus, Orosius abandoned Trogus' scanty work and availed himself of Livy's copious history. It is debatable whether he used the original text of Livy, or, as I consider more probable, a large epitome dating from the time of Tiberius.[11] It is also debatable whether the long account of Caesar's conquest of Gaul (6,7–11) comes from Caesar' s own *Commentarii*, erroneously attributed by Orosius to Suetonius,[12] or from Livy as an intermediate

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[8] Y. Janvier, *La géographie d' Orose* (Paris, 1984); Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 258–261.

[9] In brief v. J.M. Alonso-Nuñez, *La Historia Universal de Pompeyo Trogo* (Madrid, 1992) with my review in *Aevum* 68 (1994), 236–238.

[10] R. Syme, "The Date of Justin and the Discovery of Trogus", *Historia* 37 (1988), 358–371 = *Roman Papers*, VI (Oxford, 1991), 358–371.

[11] L. Bessone, "La tradizione epitomatoria liviana in età imperiale", in ANRW II,30,2 (Berlin-New York, 1982), 1230–1263.

[12] On the quotation from Suetonius at 6,7,2 v. Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 154 note 27.

source.[13] The fact remains, however, that Orosius wrote his first six books using both Trogus and Livy, the one an anti-Augustan universal historian, the other an Augustan historian of Rome. It may be doubted whether Orosius realized the contradiction inherent in his choice of sources. Yet very clear motives drove him to seek to reconcile these two opposing concepts of history: the universal tension of Christian culture, his own fervent Roman patriotism, above all his personal persuasion that it was Christianity alone that could reconcile the universalism of Trogus and the Romano-centric history of Livy.

Two general laws of the interpretation of history, doubtless borrowed from Jerome, helped Orosius in his task.

The first law was that of the *translatio imperii*. This had been known at Rome since the second century B.C. Trogus accepted it, while Livy did not. It was introduced into Christian culture by Hippolytus (the Syrian?), in the third century in his exegesis of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the *Book of Daniel*.[14] This law included in the history of salvation all those great monarchies to which divine providence had entrusted the fortunes of mankind before the rise of Rome. In applying it, however, Orosius showed the indisputable originality of a true historian, the ability to operate on a well-established tradition in order to change and correct it. In fact, for the order Assyria—Persia—Macedon—Rome, which was orientated east-west and well established by Christian chronography of the third century (Sextus Julius Africanus, Hippolytus of Rome), he substituted the order Assyria—Macedon—Carthage—Rome orientated on the four cardinal points of the compass (East—North—South—West). Assyria is the point of departure and Rome the destination, because under the former the history of salvation began with Abraham, and under the latter it culminated in the coming of Christ. Persia was left out because it was outside the Roman Empire, and thus of no interest to Orosius. In fact, in his world-picture, the world coincides with the Empire of Rome, it is an *orbis circumsaeptus*, an entity enclosed within the bounds of the Empire, as he states in the geographical chapter in book one.[15] Persia is replaced by Carthage, whose great-

[13] Direct derivation: Th. Hirschberg, "Zum gallischen Krieg des Orosius", *Hermes* 119 (1991), 84–93; via Livy: S. Karrer, *Der gallische Krieg bei Orosius* (Zürich, 1969).
[14] Hippol. *Comment. in Daniel.* 2,7 and 4,7.
[15] 1,2,1.

ness and role in history are clear and indisputable for the Spanish priest living in Africa. Indeed, he plays down the classical Polybian juxtaposition of the contemporaneous fall of Carthage and Corinth in 146 B.C., and stresses the non-contemporaneous fall of Carthage (146 B.C.) and of Numantia (133 B.C.).[16] For him, Carthaginians and Spaniards, peoples of the West, are the last and most courageous adversaries of Rome: they withstood her and then became the most trustworthy members of her Empire. Behind the emphasis on Africa (Carthage) and on Spain there is also a regional perspective of historiography, which in Orosius exists side by side with the universal perspective, but which, as shall be seen, inexorably predominates during the course of the fifth century.

For Orosius, then, there is a history of mankind before the rise of Rome which is worth narrating because it is included in the divine plan of salvation. On the other hand, the history of Rome is not merely an exceptionally important phase in the history of mankind but its very culmination. Orosius does not consider the history of republican Rome as *laudator temporis acti*, as if it were a collection of great figures and great examples, which rendered her the favourite of the gods, as the pagans claimed. Instead, here and only here in agreement with Augustine, does Orosius emphasize the wars, the grief, the catastrophes, and the tremendous suffering of that period. In many respects he judges Roman republican history severely and not differently from the history of other peoples, and yet for him even then was Rome beginning to distinguish herself from the rest of the world by merit and was preparing herself to be God's chosen for the incarnation of His Son.

At this point the second law, the *Augustustheologie*, must be considered in the light of divine providence and the Roman Empire. While it is certainly true that Christ chose of His own free will to be born during the principate of Augustus (or at any rate through the inscrutable workings of providence, which amounts to much the same thing), it is also true that Augustus deserved this privilege through his own merits and those of Rome. In fact, Christ chose to reveal himself to men at His Epiphany on the 6th of January,[17] and on the same day

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[16] 5,3,1 (Carthage and Corinth); 5,1,5–6 and especially 5,8,2 (Carthage and Numantia).

[17] 6,20; note that for Orosius the day of the Epiphany was the day of Christ's baptism.

in 29 B.C. Octavian celebrated his triumph over the East, closed the gates of the temple of Janus,[18] thus inaugurating a new era of peace, and assumed the name Augustus.[19] Here Orosius, with great historical insight, felicitously combines the old Roman idea of the Quirites, a people chosen by the gods for their *pietas*, with the Christian idea of the role of providence in history.

It follows that the Roman Empire, coeval *ab origine* with Christ, evades the historical and human law of *translatio*, to which Pompeius Trogus sought to make it conform. There would be no further westward displacement of temporal dominion, that would remain with Rome until the coming of the Antichrist and the end of time, as Jerome affirmed. The unique civil and political entity of Rome, where the earthly existence of Christianity was conceivable, constituted the supreme and final phase of history. There was history before Rome, there would be none after.

Orosius inherited the pagan idea of *aeternitas imperii* and harmonized it with the Christian idea that there shall be an end to history and only what comes after shall be eternal. Thus Rome's eternity is limited to our times, but is assured within such limits. From Christ and Augustus onwards the universalism of Trogus and the Romanocentricism of Livy are fused into a new synthesis that is both Roman and Christian.

Yet it is at precisely this point that discord arises, a fundamental divergence from the *De civitate Dei*. For Augustine, Rome is but *one* form, certainly the most noble, of *civitas hominum*, one which is destined to perish, while the *civitas Dei* shall outlive it and match itself with other forms of human history. For Orosius, however, Rome is *the* form of *civitas hominum* that safeguards the *civitas Dei* and allows it to exist to the end of time.

The complex attitude adopted by Orosius towards the history of the Roman Empire in the seventh book derives from the *Augustustheologie*. This book is the richest in personal comments on the sources used (Suetonius, Tacitus' *Historiae*,[20] Eutropius, the *Chronicon* of Jerome).

Orosius recognized that the Augustan peace and the contemporaneous coming of Christ had not rid the world of evil. Even after

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[18] The exact date was 11th January 29 B.C.

[19] The exact date was 16th January 27 B.C.

[20] On whom v. esp. T.D. Barnes, "The Fragments of Tacitus' Histories", *Classical Philology* 72 (1977), 224–231.

Augustus there were wicked emperors and disasters, which he punctiliously recorded and interpreted as divine punishment for our sins. Often in his work there is an ingenuous and mechanical relationship between an emperor's misgovernment and the subsequent series of calamities, the prime example of this is the direct connection of the persecution of the Christians with divine punishment in the shape of disasters throughout the Empire.[21] Yet, the reason given by Lactantius for the *mors persecutorum* does not appear in Orosius, with the sole exception of Galerius.

In contrast to Lactantius and Jerome, Orosius accepted the Eusebian canon of ten persecutions from Nero to Maximian, and, in a famous chapter (7,27), he compared them to the ten plagues of Egypt. However, he knew that even though Constantine had permitted Christianity, this did not eliminate the risk of martyrdom, which is intrinsic to the Church, as the successive persecutions of the pagan Julian and the Arian Valens showed. Generally, Orosius is cold towards Constantine: he recognizes that he inaugurated the Christian Empire, he praises him for having made Christianity superior to paganism, but he does not hesitate to reprove him for the execution of his son Crispus and his nephew Licinius, and, in short, does not accord his reign any epoch-making significance.[22]

He does, however, seek to show that the path Rome took after Christ was the path of ascent and progress, and that the pessimism of those who imagined that they perceived the signs of decline all around was unfounded. In order to be precise, he sets out clearly his own positive thinking about the Empire at three points in its history.

a) While the Empire was still pagan, peace was nonetheless assured throughout the Roman world. Such a happy state, previously unknown to mankind afflicted by continuous war, came about for the first time under Augustus, and, although afterwards it was often interrupted, it never disappeared entirely. Proof is given by the repeated closures of the temple of Janus, which Orosius always emphasizes. Augustus closed it in 29 B.C., reopened it for the *bellum Cantabricum*

[21] With some difficulty, e.g. for the reign of Trajan: according to Orosius there were divine punishments, notwithstanding the fact that Trajan at the beginning was an unconscious persecutor and caused persecution to cease as soon as Pliny informed him of the innocence of the Christians (7,12,3).

[22] 6,22 (at § 26 the executions of Crispus and Licinius).

in 26 B.C., closed it again at the end of this war in 23 B.C., reopened it again before the third closure in either 12 or 3 B.C., a closure which Orosius brings down to coincide with the birth of Christ and prolongs until 12 A.D.[23] Vespasian closed it again after the taking of Jerusalem in 70;[24] according to Tacitus, Vespasian reopened it after only one year, but Eutropius claims that it was not reopened until the Persian war of Gordian III in 242.[25] Here Orosius lists his different sources and shows that, when necessary, he knows how to sift the evidence with the correct historical method. He obviously did not have at his disposal Aurelius Victor, who placed yet another closure between Vespasian and Gordian III, under Marcus Aurelius in either 176 or 180.[26]

b) Starting from the reign of Theodosius I, who made Christianity the only legitimate religion of the Roman Empire, such alternation of peace and war is replaced by the new factor of the bloodless victory which God gives to Christian arms. This theory of victory without the shedding of blood, which is gained through devotion, and which is both God's reward and gift to His faithful, had recently been elaborated by Ambrose.[27] Orosius borrows it and systematically applies it to military events from Theodosius onwards. The religious merits of Theodosius, his compatriot, brought him and his sons, who succeeded him, God's help against all usurpers (Magnus Maximus, Eugenius, Gildo). Their successes are obtained by prayer, graced by miracles (e.g. the miracle of the wind at the battle of the Frigidus), or by apparitions (e.g. that of Ambrose on the eve of the battle against Gildo), and gained without any loss on either side.[28] They show that now, at a time when Christianity is the only official religion, the distinction between peace and war is cancelled and superseded, since God allows wars to be *pacifically* victorious.

c) Given this background of full confidence in the Christian progress of history, Orosius' attitude to the barbarians must also be considered, and this at first sight seems contradictory.

On the one hand he declares that the ten thousand Gothic aux-

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[23] The three closures under Augustus at 6,20,1 and 8; 6,21,1 and 11; 6,22,1–2.
[24] 7,9,9.
[25] 7,19,4 = Tac. *Hist.* Fr. 5 Heubner, and Eutrop. 9,2.
[26] Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 27,7.
[27] G. Zecchini, "S. Ambrogio e le origini del motivo della vittoria incruenta", *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia* 38 (1984), 391–404.
[28] 7,35,6–7 (Magnus Maximus); 7,35,12–22 (Frigidus); 7,36,7–12 (Gildo).

iliaries who were massacred at the Frigidus are not to be reckoned as part of the loss of human life at that battle, he accuses Stilicho, inasmuch as he was a Vandal, of being a traitor and responsible for the break in the Rhine front on the last day of 406, he rejoices at the news that the barbarians in his beloved Spain are killing each other in their tribal wars,[29] and here reveals his visceral hatred of the barbarians, a hatred shared by nearly all of his Roman contemporaries.

On the other hand he minimizes the sack of Rome in 410, which lasted only three days, during which time sacred buildings were respected, in comparison with the far more terrible sack in 386 B.C.,[30] the difference being that the Visigoths, albeit Arian, are Christians as well as the Romans, and here his polemical attitude to the pagans is evident. Moreover, he even affirms that the barbarians in occupied Spain have now beaten their swords into ploughs and live in friendship and alliance with the Spaniards, who prefer freedom under the barbarians to financial oppression under Rome. In the meanwhile, the barbarians are turning to Christianity and filling the churches, which shows that the invasions, although a traumatic event, were providential for the spreading of the true faith.[31] Lastly Orosius reports with due emphasis the speech of Ataulf, the king of the Visigoths, in Narbonne on the occasion of his marriage in 414 to Galla Placidia, daughter of Theodosius: once he had dreamed of destroying "Romania" and of replacing it with "Gothia", but now he realized that no political community could exist without Roman law (*sine quibus (i.e. legibus) res publica non est res publica*) and so he considered it more convenient to place the military might of the Visigoths at the service of Rome to restore and increase her dominion (*restituendo in integrum augendoque Romano nomine*).[32]

In fact, there is no contradiction in Orosius' ideas on the problem of the barbarians, rather a variety of options. The first is to eliminate the barbarians, or better, let them eliminate one another, it is merely internal discord, a lack of loyalty towards the sons of Theodosius (one need only recall the many usurpers), that prevents

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[29] 7,35,19 (Frigidus); 7,38,1 (Stilicho); 7,43,15 (barbarians in Spain).
[30] 7,39 (paragraph 17, reference to the fire of 386 B.C.).
[31] 7,41,7–8.
[32] 7,43 (quotation from § 6 of this text). Excellent analysis of the whole chapter in A. Marchetta, *Orosio e Ataulfo nell' ideologia dei rapporti romano-barbarici* (Rome, 1987).

such a solution.[33] The second is to convert them and/or use them as allies, perhaps against other barbarians, to renew the traditional Roman policy of military expansion, the presumption being that the barbarians would accept the *ius Romanum*, without which there would be no living together in a civilized manner.

Here Orosius is adamant in placing an insuperable barrier between barbarism and civilization, it is not the religion of the Christians that constitutes the *res publica*, but Roman law, conversion to Christianity comes later, and then only *intra fines*, within the bounds of the Empire, the laws of which are accepted, while conversion *extra fines*, without any recognition of the Empire, is simply unthinkable. Here again, in opposition to Augustine's ideas, Orosius' city of God does not involve itself dialectically with the city of men, but is contained within the only conceivable city of men, Rome. Ultimately Orosius' fundamental hostility to the barbarians is tempered by the optimism inherent in his conception of history: if the Roman Empire is destined by God to last till the end of time, in one way or another it will be able to curb the menace of the barbarians.

At the end of the work Orosius addresses Augustine, as he did at the beginning, and entrusts him with the fruit of his obedience: if he approves of it and publishes it, the merit will be his, while if he disapproves of it, his judgement will be definitive (*tibi adiudicanda si edas, per te iudicata si deleas*).[34] Yet, because of the abundant richness, complexity, and coherence of the *Historiae adversus paganos*, which has been stressed in these pages, it is impossible that Orosius had misunderstood what Augustine wanted. Indeed, behind the formal courtesy there is the knowledge of having elaborated a general interpretation of history capable of fitting into the framework of the Christian belief in divine providence, but which otherwise has little in common with the *De civitate Dei*. In particular, two of the central themes of Orosius, that the Roman Empire will last for ever in this world, and that Christianity cannot exist except in the Roman Empire, are incompatible with Augustine's theology of history.

The importance of Orosius is thus twofold: on the one hand he has brought back Christian historiography into the mainstream of classical historiography, and created a masterpiece which is both the

[33] Orosius expresses it clearly at 7,42,1.
[34] 7,43,20 (cf. also 1, *praef.*, 1–2).

last work of Roman historiography and the first of western Christian historiography, on the other he has composed an anti-*De civitate Dei*, and has been able to erect beside the formidable edifice constructed by Augustine another which is equally intellectually coherent. Of course, Augustine is more original, more profound, more 'modern', in the sense that he is topical in every age. Orosius is more tied to his own times and the experiences of his own generation, but is precisely this that makes him a reliable witness to majority of public opinion at the beginning of the fifth century, when almost all Christians wanted to be such without giving up being Romans, and thus were closer to Orosius than to Augustine.

Furthermore, the succeeding centuries also did justice to the greatness of Orosius. Before it became fashionable from the Enlightenment onwards to consider him a fool,[35] his reading of the past, his vision of history was dominant in subsequent works: it was the model for the *Historia Romana* of Symmachus in the time of Theodoric, it was a source for Gregory of Tours, the venerable Bede, as well as for the greatest universal chronicler of the Middle Ages, Otto von Freising, it was translated into Old English at the court of Aelfred the Great c. 890, into Arabic at the instigation of the Khalif of Cordoba in the tenth century, it was read by John of Salisbury, Dante, and Petrarch, *inter alios*, it went through twenty-seven editions between 1471 and 1738, and, finally, it exercised such an influence on Christian thought that it was substantially in accord even with Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681).[36]

3. *Historiography in Africa after Orosius*[37]

From at least the second century A.D. Africa was one of the most culturally vibrant places in the Latin West. Indeed, it was there at the beginning of the fifth century that the two most important works of the period were written, Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, and Orosius' *Historiae adversus paganos*. In this context three things should be noticed:

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[35] The influence of the thought of the Enlightenment is still evident in Fr. Paschoud, *Roma Aeterna* (Rome, 1967), 276–292.

[36] On the fortunes of Orosius' *Historiae* see Lippold, *op. cit.*, I, XL–XLVI.

[37] In general cf. Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 213–227. On Africa in the fifth century and the Vandals cf. Chr. Courtois, *Les Vandals et l'Afrique* (Paris, 1955) and F.M. Clover, *The Late Roman West and the Vandals* (Aldershot, 1993).

I) the sudden flowering of hagiography, e.g. the *Vita Ambrosii* by Paulinus of Milan, and then the *Vita Augustini* by Possidius of Calama, II) the diffusion, thanks to Augustine, of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Rufinus, III) the activity of Q. Julius Hilarianus.

a) The only thing known about Hilarianus[38] is that in 397 he wrote an opuscule *De cursu temporum* or *De mundi duratione*. In this he challenged the pagan prophecy mentioned by Augustine in *De civitate Dei*[39] which claimed that Christianity would end in 398, and stated his own millenary belief that the world would end in 498 after a century of catastrophes. The attribution of the so-called *Liber genealogus*, datable to c. 407–425, to the same Hilarianus is debatable, however. This is merely the Latin version of the *Chronicon* of Hippolytus (including the geographical parts, the *Diamerismós* and the *Stadiasmós*) brought down to 334 and included in the work of the Chronographer of 354, but without the geographical parts. It is evidence for the survival of Hippolytus in that part of the Latin West where Eusebius-Jerome would become popular only much later.

Between 428 and 439 Africa was overrun by the Vandals. The main consequences of the dominion of these Arian barbarians, which lasted until the Byzantine reconquest a century later, are well-known: no integration with the Romans of Africa, recurrent persecution of Catholics, and the consequent cultural isolation. Paradoxically these factors at a certain point became advantages. During the first phase of the Vandal kingdom (ca. 430–480) it seemed that intellectual activity had ceased, but in the second phase (ca. 480–530) it flourished again, not only in the field of historiography, but also in that of poetry, (one has only to think of a poet such as Dracontius), thanks to the tenacious survival of the forms of late antiquity through isolation.

b) In 484 Victor of Vita wrote the *Historia persecutionis Africanae provinciae* in three books.[40] It amalgamates much material on the acts and sufferings of martyrs, it was influenced by the *De mortibus persecutorum*, for example, it inflicts on the heretic Nicasius and the persecutor King Huneric the same death by putrefaction that Lactantius

[38] I. Lana, "Q. Giulio Ilariano e il problema della storiografia cristiana nel IV secolo", *RFIC* 123 (1995), 73–89.

[39] August. *De civit. Dei* 18,53–54.

[40] Courtois, *op. cit.*; S. Costanza, *Vittore di Vita: Storia della persecuzione vandalica in Africa* (Roma, 1981).

gives to Galerius,[41] in the prologue it echoes Jerome, whose phrase *debacchantibus barbaris* is changed to *debacchantibus Arianis* to stress the parallel between the two periods of tragic disorder,[42] it was also influenced by Rufinus the translator of Eusebius (so-defined at 3,61) in the author's decision to write a monograph on a particular event in the history of the Church. In fact, Eusebius had placed in an appendix to either book eight or book ten of his *Historia Ecclesiastica* a piece dedicated to the martyrs in Palestine during the reign of Diocletian, of which martyrs he is a primary witness, as is Victor for events in Africa under Huneric. Again the influence of Eusebius as translated by Rufinus can be discerned in the insertion of documents (letters, edicts, the long *Liber fidei catholicae* written by Eugenius bishop of Carthage and quoted *in toto* at 2,56–100) in the narrative of the *Historia*. Finally, the filial dedication to Eugenius, the invitation to recast the work in a better form,[43] and at the same time the decision to write a *historia* and thus to operate at a high level of historiography undoubtedly recall Orosius.

Lactantius, Jerome, Rufinus, and Orosius are thus influences on Victor, and he shows that he is aware of the cultural continuity between the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth and the Vandalic period. There is, however, no corresponding political continuity. No reconciliation was possible between the Vandal Arians and the Roman Catholics, and Rome herself, whose sack by Genseric in 455 is the only non-African event mentioned in the *Historia*,[44] is now merely the seat of the Church. As a result, the only hope seems to lie in military intervention by Byzantium, which Victor tries to solicit both by denouncing the arrogance of Huneric towards Uranius, the envoy of the Emperor Zeno, whom he saw as the defender of the catholic churches (3,32), and by ending his work with an appeal to the whole catholic population to intervene on behalf of persecuted Africans (3,64); such intervention should, in effect, be immediate and decisive. Thus, in the shadow of Orosius the *Historia* of Victor is also and especially a *Historia adversus Vandalos*.

c) The same background of ever-present fear and imminent liberation can also be found in the *De aetatibus mundi et hominis* of

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[41] 3,71; on the authenticity of the chapter see A. Roncoroni, "Sulla morte di re Unerico", *Romanobarbarica* 2 (1977), 247–257.
[42] *Praef.*, 4.
[43] *Praef.*, 2.
[44] 1,24.

Fulgentius of Ruspe.[45] This work is datable to the period between 494 and the first years of the sixth century, when, after a decade of tolerance, persecution broke out again in the last years of Gunthamund (494–496) and under Thrasamund (496–523), and appeared to coincide with the arrival of the Antichrist, expected by the millenaries in 498. This persecution is recalled in the pessimistic prologue devoted to a bitter denunciation of human greed.

The *De aetatibus* is a compendium of universal history in fourteen books from Adam to 364. Books I–IX deal with Jewish history down to the Maccabees, book X with Alexander the Great, XI with Rome down to Caesar, XII and XIII with Christ and the Apostles, XIV with the Roman Empire. Secular history is comprised in just three books, X, XI, and XIV, the principal source is Orosius, but use is also made of a Latin version of the romance of Alexander,[46] perhaps by Antidamas, and of Rufinus at the end of the work. Although Orosius is the principal historiographical authority for these last historians of Roman Africa, the interpretations and especially the state of mind of Fulgentius are vastly different.

The whole history of mankind, in as much as it is an earthly city, is condemned, it is merely a sequence of one crime after another, the great conquests are termed "robberies", Alexander the Great is called *praedo*, as is Pompey, in a clear echo of the *De civitate Dei*;[47] in the succession of empires, in which Persia returns in place of Carthage, despite Orosius, nothing positive is reported, not even the synchronism of Augustus and Christ, which was the linch-pin of Orosius' *Augustustheologie*, changes the course of history. With few exceptions, such as Vespasian, who took revenge on the Jews for their iniquities, or Trajan,[48] the Roman Empire too is oppressed by the turpitude of the line of Caesar (*Caesareanae turpitudinem stirpis*),[49] and every virtue and strictness of conduct is lacking.[50]

Thus, the decision to end in 364, at first sight strange, now acquires

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[45] R. Helm, "Fulgentius, De aetatibus mundi", *Philologus* 10 (1897), 253–289; P. Langlois, "Fulgentius" in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 8 (Stuttgart, 1972), 632–661.

[46] C. Stöcker, "Alexander der Grosse bei Fulgentius und die Historia Alexandri Macedonis des Antidamas", *Vetera Christianorum* 16 (1979), 55–75.

[47] 166,22 and 169,10–12 Helm respectively; cf. Augustine *De civit. Dei* 4,4.

[48] 177,14 and 178,26–179,1 Helm respectively.

[49] 177,1–2 Helm.

[50] 177,9–10 Helm.

a precise significance, the history stops with the Julian persecution, for it is the destiny of the 'city of God' to be persecuted by the 'city of men', as was still happening thanks to the Vandals in the time of Fulgentius. At the same time mention is made of the accession of Valentinian I as a faint sign of hope: calm returns after every persecution, and the forces of evil are destined not to triumph. Thus it may be hoped that intervention from without will put an end to the Vandalic persecution as well, such intervention is not, as in Victor, to be expected from Byzantium, which was ruled by the Monophysite Anastasius I, but from Theodoric, the king of Italy, who was also Arian, but had Valentinian I among his models,[51] was a rival of the Vandals, and sided with Pope Symmachus during the schism of Laurentius (498–506).[52]

This rather timid overture to the Italy of Theodoric, which was still Roman and immersed in its glorious past, is coherent with the classicism of African historiography in the fifth century, from Orosius to the anti-Orosian Fulgentius. Though fascinating, it is an isolated and almost unnatural extension of the culture of late antiquity, elsewhere, and in other forms, the transition to the Middle Ages was already well underway.

4. *Gallo-Roman historiography: Sulpicius Alexander and Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus*

Gaul was the main point of barbarian attacks. It was not as geographically remote as Africa, and had its own vibrant cultural tradition linked to its schools of rhetoric, as shown by the *esprit précieux* of the times.[53] Thus it is not surprising that here too, in the period from the end of the fourth century to the first half of the fifth, there survived forms of 'high' historiography, based on extremely conservative models.

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[51] *Anon. Vales. Pars posterior* 60; cf. G. Zecchini, "L'Anonimo Valesiano II: genere storiografico e contesto politico", Centro Italiano di Studi sull' Alto Medioevo, XIII (Spoleto, 1993), 809–818; I. König, *Aus der Zeit Theoderichs des Großen* (Darmstadt, 1997), 143–144.

[52] J. Moorhead, "The Laurentian Schism. East and West in the Roman Church", *Church History* 47 (1978), 125–136.

[53] A. Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire et l'esprit précieux en Gaule aux derniers jours de l'empire* (Paris, 1943).

Sulpicius Alexander was of Roman origin, and perhaps still pagan, while Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus, of Romano-German origin was certainly Christian. They wrote two historical works, *Historia(e)*, respectively in at least four and at least twelve books. Of Alexander, depending on numeration, there survive four or seven fragments, of Frigeridus six. Alexander's narrative went either from 375/378, where Ammianus ended, or from 383, the death of Gratian, to 395, the death of Theodosius. That of Frigeridus went either from 395, where Sulpicius Alexander ended, or from 410, the sack of Rome, to 425, the accession of Valentinian III. Both are known solely because they are quoted by Gregory of Tours in his *Libri Historiarum*, the so-called *Historia Francorum*.

These two historians, who have been so long neglected, have recently been the subjects of two opposing theories. In G. Zecchini's opinion,[54] they are two writers with mainly local interests, i.e. historians of the barbarian invasions of Gaul, precisely because they are mentioned only by Gregory of Tours, and because all the fragments deal with either the first kings of the Franks or with Romano-Frankish relations on the Rhine, the only exception being a long fragment of Frigeridus which describes the mental and physical qualities of Aetius; Alexander appears to support Theodosius, and Frigeridus Aetius; there would be a lacuna between the two from 395 to 410. In Fr. Paschoud's opinion,[55] however, the scope of their narrative was far wider, both geographically (the fact that they seem to write exclusively about the Franks may be due to the selections made by Gregory for his own purposes), and temporally, because one continues the other from 395. On this interpretation they would be a link with Ammianus, in fact his continuators, Frigeridus, in particular, would be the source of Olympiodorus (to whom, in his turn, Zosimus is indebted from 5,26 to 6,13) for the political and military events in the west at the beginning of the fifth century.

No attempt will be made here to adjudicate between these two theories. It is, however, worthwhile to point out what Alexander and Frigeridus have in common, viz. the same title for their works, the division of their material into different books, and a rich narrative

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[54] Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 241–250.

[55] Fr. Paschoud, "Les descendants d'Ammien", in *Mélanges A. Schneider* (Neuchâtel, 1997), 141–147; Id., "Note sur les relations de trois historiens des IV^{e} et V^{e} siècles", *Aut Tard* 6 (1998), 313–316.

that deals with political and military events. In the case of Frigeridus it may be added that it is possible to discern the traces of a solidly classical historical culture. His portrait of Aetius, as it has been noted,[56] has many features in common with that of Merobaudes, who wrote panegyrics about Aetius, both of which depend heavily upon Caesarian sources such as Suetonius and Sallust, and perhaps other lesser writers, for their aim is to establish a parallel between Aetius and Julius Caesar. All these factors combine to make Alexander and Frigeridus the last exponents of a doomed noble tradition. Perhaps continuators of Ammianus, they were certainly contemporaries of Orosius, they share his conservatism in the writing of history, but not his capacity for a complex interpretation of history, nor his literary fascination, which were the basis of his fame.

5. *Gallo-Roman chronography: from Sulpicius Severus to the Anonymous Chronicler of 452*

In the Gaul of Alexander and Frigeridus a new form of Christian historiography was spreading, that of chronography, with an intensity that was unknown elsewhere.

a) Sulpicius Severus, the Aquitanian aristocrat, retired to the hermitage of Primuliacum, where he wrote the *Vita Martini*. He was the founder of western hagiography, and in 403 he finished the two books of *Chronica* which went down to 400.[57]

The *Chronica* are not arranged in brief entries year by year, as later works of chronography would be, and as was the case with Jerome. Their narrative sweep resembles more the genre of epitomes or compendia of universal histories. On the other hand, their main sources, apart from the Bible, are the pagan chronicles of Cornelius Nepos, the Christian ones of Sextus Julius Africanus and Hippolytus (both of the Severan age), the *Chronicle* of Jerome (only

[56] Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 163–179.

[57] G.K. van Andel, *The Christian Concept of History in the Chronicle of Sulpicius Severus* (Amsterdam, 1976); S. Costanza, "I 'Chronica' di Sulpicio Severo e le Historiae di Trogo-Giustino" in *La storiografia ecclesiastica nella tarda antichità* (Messina, 1980), 275–312; F. Ghizzoni, *Sulpicio Severo* (Parma, 1983); C. Stancliffe, *St. Martin and his Hagiographer. History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus* (Oxford, 1983); S. Isetta, "Cronaca di una fine annunciata: la storia delle persecuzioni in Sulpicio Severo" in *Serta antiqua et mediaevalia*, N.S. I (Rome, 1997), 255–289.

sporadically), and Justin's epitome of the universal history of Trogus. This selection of sources is enough to show the mixed nature of the work of Sulpicius Severus, a cross between chronicle and compendium.

Universal history as understood by Sulpicius Severus is completely different from universal history as it would shortly be understood by Orosius. The *Chronica* of Severus fall into three parts, the history of Christ, the history of the persecutions, and the histories of the heresies.

The history of Christ takes up book I and about half of book II, i.e. about three-quarters of the whole, and is mainly a modest summary of the Bible. The few references to secular history are limited to lists of rulers (Persian at 2,9, Seleucid at 2,19), dates (the date of Marathon in relation to the foundation of Rome at 2,9, the duration of the Persian empire at 2,17, the interval between the Crucifixion and Stilicho's consulship in 400 at 2,27), and events that are always somehow connected with Israel (the retreat of Antiochus IV from Egypt on Roman orders at 2,18, which was the prelude to the epic of the Maccabees at 2,20–24; the only exploit of Pompey in the East to be recorded is his entry into the Temple of Jerusalem at 2,26). Neither Greece nor Rome is accorded any special space in this historical perspective which is exclusively Old Testament, the only events of any importance are the various stages in the history of salvation. It should be noted that there is no reference in Sulpicius Severus to the *Augustustheologie* and to the operation of providence in the Roman Empire, indeed the latter is specifically excluded by the fact that at 2,27 the Incarnation is synchronized with the reign of Herod and not with the principate of Augustus.

The history of the persecutions covers the whole period of the Roman Empire and confirms a negative impression of the Empire itself. The persecutions are nine, not ten, as in Orosius, and there are variants in the two lists: Sulpicius Severus mentions Hadrian and Valerian, Orosius Septimius Severus and Aurelian. The tenth persecution is reserved for the coming of the Antichrist, which, as in Hilarianus, is forecast to happen in a hundred years' time.

In the meanwhile, heresies take the place of persecutions, first the Arian, then the Priscillianist. The vicissitudes of Priscillianism take up the final chapters (2,46–51), and Sulpicius Severus takes the opportunity to ventilate his judgements on the different components of the Church in his time. On the one hand, Priscillian is condemned as a heretic, but is also admired for his undoubtable qualities—the model is Sallust's Catiline. On the other, the pious and saintly church-

man who opposes him, but intercedes for him to the last, is Martin of Tours, the paragon of every Christian virtue in the author's Gallo-Roman perspective. In the middle are the bishops, especially Ithacius, who is portrayed as a moral monster who successfully demanded that a secular judge, designated by the emperor Magnus Maximus, should pronounce the sentence of the death on Priscillian and his followers. The tragic outcome of the Priscillianist heresy was certainly not approved by all bishops: in particular, Ambrose, in a letter addressed to Valentinian II (*Epist.* 30,12 Faller), denounced the excesses with biting contempt. It is, then, significant that Sulpicius Severus does not mention Ambrose and replaces him with Martin, who becomes the only exception to an ecclesiastical hierarchy already compromised by worldliness.

Thus, even when the Empire was Christian, history did not progress, a view exactly the opposite of that of Orosius. Moreover, peace and prosperity lead inevitably to a decline in behaviour; once, this was that of the Roman *nobiles* (here a new and clear echo of Sallust), now, it is that of the bishops. At the end of the work, at 2,51, there re-emerges all the hostility of Sulpicius Severus towards the bishops, who are blamed for the religious discords that have been raging for the last fifteen years, and elsewhere[58] Ambrose himself is vehemently criticized for being too susceptible to the blandishments of power.

The barbarian invasions are superimposed on the internal discord, similar to that at the end of the republic. Although he does not mention it directly, Sulpicius Severus refers to it in the explanation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel. This is set at the beginning of book II, in an exceptional position: the feet of the statue, which were made part of iron and part of clay, symbolize the Empire, torn apart by usurpers and pervaded with elements incompatible with its *mores*, e.g. the Jews and the barbarians. So Sulpicius Severus affirms that barbarian *mores* cannot be assimilated, and this shows his anti-barbarian attitude to be much more rigid than that of Orosius, and it includes a vision of the present and of history in general that is utterly pessimistic.

The ascetic spirituality of Sulpicius Severus, his decision to avoid human society, his distancing of himself from all worldliness form the basis of his rejection of history and his condemnation of Rome,

[58] Sulpic. Sever. *Dialog.* 1,25,6.

past and present, pagan and Christian. Thus, his *Chronica* are the most coherent evidence for an attitude amongst the Christians of his time which, although not widespread, was capable of exercising a considerable intellectual fascination. Such a radical standpoint, with its rejection of all compromise, was the very opposite of Orosius' secular triumphalism, and far removed from the infinite complexity and fineness of shading of the *De civitate Dei.*

b) The classic form of western chronography is the *Epitoma chronicon* of Prosper of Aquitaine. He was an intellectual, poet, theologian, and controversialist. Intransigently anti-Pelagian, he published the first edition of his chronicle in 433, while he was still in Gaul, and further editions (at least two, in 445 and 455, it being most uncertain if there was another edition in 451) after settling in Rome as the secretary, *notarius*, of Pope Leo I.[59] Two anonymous continuations, the *Ovetensis* of Roman origin, and the *Reichenaviensis* of African origin, together with the choice of chronographers of the sixth century, such as Victor of Tunnuna and Maximus of Saragossa to be *continuatores Prosperi*, attest the immediate and widespread success of his work.

Prosper in turn draws on Jerome. The source for the chronological framework of events is the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* in the same recension used by Hydatius,[60] and the dating is by consular pairs. Although his annotations are scarce, Prosper is the most valuable source for the history of the West in the first half of the fifth century.

Prosper's attitude to Aetius, chief among the principal actors in the political history of his times, has recently been at centre of a lively debate. Some, such as O.J. Mänchen-Helfen and St. Muhlberger, consider him anti-Aetius, while others, such as C. Molé and G. Zecchini, consider him pro-Aetius.[61] Some of his lemmas may seem hostile to Aetius, but in reality are not so, such as, for example, the lemma on the murder of Felix, his predecessor as *magister militum* (Aetius was involved, but also justified), or that on the defeat of Litorius at

[59] L. Valentin, *St. Prosper d'Aquitaine* (Toulouse, 1900); C. Molé Ventura, "Prospettive universali e prospettive locali nella storiografia latina del V secolo" in *La storiografia ecclesiastica nella tarda antichità* (Messina, 1980), 195–239; St. Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers* (Leeds, 1990).

[60] R. Burgess, *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana* (Oxford, 1993).

[61] O.J. Mänchen-Helfen, *Die Welt der Hunnen* (Wien, 1978), 94 and 101; Muhlberger, *op. cit.*; Molé Ventura, *Prospettive*; G. Zecchini, *Aezio* (Rome, 1983), 72–74.

Toulouse, an example of human presumption (Aetius was his superior, but also in contrast to him).[62] Prosper certainly did criticize Aetius for being taken by surprise when Attila invaded Italy in 452,[63] on the other hand, Prosper carefully records Aetius' many successes in Gaul, extols his *prouidentia* on the occasion of his victory over the Huns at the battle of the Catalaunian plains in 451 and finally deprecates the cruelty of his assassination.[64]

In the face of such evidence, which at first sight appears contradictory, it would be better first of all to establish Prosper's historical perspective. This was not politico-military but essentially ecclesiastical, and indeed, after 440, papal. The real protagonist of the age is Pope Leo I, the very paradigm of a saintly man who puts his trust not in his own abilities, but in God. Secular history is not in itself foreign to the Christian, but he may influence it by prayer and devotion more than by his worldly qualities. Equally, history is not foreign to God, who intervenes providentially, whether invited by the faithful or not. Consequently the believer must never lose hope in the designs of God, even when faced with misfortune and catastrophe.

In a consideration of this perspective there must be placed Prosper's judgement on the Empire and its officers, Aetius above all. Since Aetius had made a privileged relationship with the pope one of the cardinal points of his policy, it is precisely for this reason that Prosper is in principle favourable to him.[65] He is in agreement with the policy of appeasement towards the barbarians, towards whom he displays a serene equilibrium.[66] In this light, even the delusion of 452, perhaps an echo of that of the pope, should be incidental, on the other hand, the events of 452 represent for Prosper the confirmation that even the most gifted of men, Aetius himself, could be confused in his own pride and exposed to unforeseen humiliation, because only God is the lord of history.

On the whole, Prosper, much more than Orosius, is an historian in the spirit of Augustine. The doings of men in history are not

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[62] Prosp. *Chron.* 1303 and 1335.

[63] Prosp. *Chron.* 1365 (*nihil duce nostro Aetio . . . prospiciente*).

[64] Prosp. *Chron.* 1290, 1298, 1322 (victories in Gaul), 1364 (Catalaunian Plains), 1373 (death of Aetius).

[65] G. Zecchini, "La politica religiosa di Aezio", *Contributi dell'Istituto di Storia Antica* 7 (Milan, 1981), 250–277.

[66] Muhlberger, *op. cit.*, 121–127.

always bad, as his contemporary Salvian of Marseilles believed.[67] It is the presumption to act on the basis of one's own strength and not on that of trusting abandonment in God that is the greatest sin, a presumption which the Pelagian heresy helped to spread.

c) Polemius Silvius and the anonymous author of the Gallic *Chronicon* of 452 are connected not with Pelagianism proper, but with so-called "semi-Pelagianism". Both authors belong to the intellectual monastic environment of Lérins, where there was a mixture of legitimism and examples of asceticism, influences of eastern monasticism, and the tendency to uphold the metropolitan rights of the bishop of Arles against the pope.[68]

Polemius Silvius dedicated in 449 his *Laterculus* to Eucherius of Lyons, a member of the community at Lérins. The *Laterculus*, like the work of the Chronographer of 354, is a calendar, in which were inserted eleven sections of varying erudition; of the seven that survive three are relevant to history, one being a list of emperors, one a list of the provinces of the Empire, and one an epitome of universal history.[69]

The list of emperors (*Nomina omnium principum Romanorum*) comprises also a very full list of usurpers, which comes from a list drawn up before c. 397/398, as does the list of the provinces. It agrees at some points with the list of *tyranni* that can be constructed from the *Historia Augusta*, and disagrees at others. All things considered, it is evidence of the attention paid, even in the middle of the fifth century, to the phenomenon of usurpation, which had been prevalent in Gaul from the third century and already recorded in a historiographical context by Eusebius of Nantes.[70] In Polemius the insertion of the names of the usurpers beside those of the emperors acquires a greater significance in the light of the debate between the supporters of the dynastic principle and the supporters of the principle of choosing among the best (the first of the latter were pagan, their successors "semi-Pelagian"). The supporters of the dynastic princi-

[67] For the similarities and differences between Prosper and Salvian see Muhlberger, *op. cit.*, 128–130.

[68] On the intellectual environment at Lérins S. Pricoco, *L'isola dei santi* (Rome, 1978) is a classic.

[69] Th. Mommsen, "Polemii Silvii Laterculus" in *Gesammelte Schriften* VII (Berlin, 1909), 633–667; K. Ziegler, "Polemius" nº 9 in RE XXI–1 (1951), 1260–1263.

[70] G. Zecchini, "I Tyranni triginta: la scelta di un numero e le sue implicazioni" in *Historiae Augustae Colloquium Bonnense* (Bari, 1997), 265–274.

ple, amongst them Orosius, defended the legitimacy of the dynasty of Theodosius, even if his sons were minors, *principes pueri*, and thus inexperienced, the supporters of the other principle, amongst whom were Polemius and the anonymous author of the Gallic Chronicle of 452, objected that the very dangers inherent in such inexperience justified a choice from outside the dynasty, and thought that it was necessary to entrust the state to capable men, since men save themselves by their own efforts; the supporters of the dynastic principle believed that God would provide to guard even young and tender princes.[71]

The *Breviarium temporum* takes over from the *De civitate Dei* the parallel between the history of the Middle East (from Abraham) and that of Greece (from the kings of Sicyon). It is adopted according to the traditional scheme of the *translatio imperii* (Assyria—Media—Persia—Macedon—Rome) and is attentive to synchronism, e.g. that of Cyrus and Tarquinius Priscus. It then stresses in a particularly Gallic way the figure of Caesar as first emperor, under whom Rome's expansionist urge was exhausted with the conquest of Gaul and of Britain. Finally the secular approach of the *Breviarium* is notable, except for a brief acknowledgement of the privileges granted by Constantine to Christianity.

d) The Gallic Chronicle of 452 is a *continuatio Hieronymi* not as rich or complex as that of Prosper.[72] It seeks to extol the chief representatives of the religious environment of Lérins, above all Hilary of Arles, the great adversary of Pope Leo, and to stand half-way between Pelagius and his detractors, by condemning both, and accusing even Augustine of heresy.[73] In the political sphere the anonymous author's Roman patriotism drives him to denounce the presence at the summit of the Empire of sovereigns too young to confront adequately such a grave situation, hence the lack of support for the *pars Orientis* at the time of the second Hunnic war (447),[74] and hence the extraordinary power of Aetius, to whom the Gallic Chronicle is extremely

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[71] C. Molé Ventura, *Principi fanciulli* (Catania, 1992), 205–288.

[72] Muhlberger, *op. cit.*, 136–192 (pp. 152ff. treatment of the sources, amongst which is the *Narratio de imperatoribus domus Valentinianae et Theodosianae*, an anonymous collection of brief biographies of emperors from Valentinian I to Honorius, written perhaps in the West around 430, edited by Mommsen, *Chronica minora* I, MGH AA IX (Berolini, 1892), 629–630).

[73] *Chron. Gall. ad ann. 452*, 91.

[74] *Chron. Gall. ad ann. 452*, 132.

hostile because of his rivalry with Valentinian III, for the support he gave to the Gallo-Roman aristocracy intolerant of the central power, and finally for his collaboration with the pope against Hilary of Arles. Over all there prevails a profound anti-barbarian feeling and a deep pessimism about the destiny of the Empire. Not for nothing does the Gallic Chronicle close with a picture of Italy, the defenceless prey of Attila's rage.[75]

It is thus both theologically and politically opposed to Prosper. He who thinks that men can and should be saved by their own efforts will judge his own days more severely and negatively than he who trusts in a Providence that is inscrutable, but undoubtedly beneficent.

Prosper, Polemius and the Gallic Chronicle of 452 represent the three summits of Gallo-Roman historiography in the middle of the fifth century. This historiographical genre, already well established, does not decline in Gaul even in the following century, as shown by two other chronicles, even if of lesser importance, those of the Anonymous of 511 and of Marius of Avenches, the historian of the kingdom of the Burgundians. It is Spain, however, that furnishes the last and greatest of the fifth century chronographers.

6. *Hydatius of Lemica*

Hydatius was Galician, as was Orosius, he was bishop of Chaves, and he spent almost his entire life under the rule of the Suevi, but he never denied the wholly Roman Spain of his youth.[76] He wrote a *Chronicon*, which is another *continuatio Hieronymi*, going from 379 to 469, and is a primary source for the events of his time. Although he is the most important author for the history of Spain in the first half of the fifth century, it should be remembered that his perspective becomes ever more localized as he gradually failed to procure knowledge of what was happening in other parts of the Empire. His intention is to write a universal chronicle similar to that of his model Jerome. Like Prosper he uses the *Consularia Constantinopolitana*, but

[75] *Chron. Gall. ad ann. 452*, 141.

[76] A. Tranoy, *Hydace, Chronique*, I–II (Paris, 1974) (not reliable philologically); Burgess, *op. cit.* (standard edition); C. Molé Ventura, "Uno storico del V secolo: il vescovo Idazio" *Siculorum Gymnasium* 27 (1974), 279–351; 28 (1975), 58–139; Muhlberger, *op. cit.*, 193–266; Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 230–233.

dates by Olympiads and regnal years of emperors, not by consular pairs. Compared with the sparse prose of other contemporary chronographers, his ample narrative is truly remarkable.[77]

Like Orosius, Hydatius is a patriot and a legitimist. For both, the reign of Theodosius I is the acme of Roman history, and their loyalty to his dynasty is indisputable. Both of them are unable to imagine living in a world that is neither Roman nor catholic. Thus, Hydatius is hostile to heretics (Arians and Priscillianists), barbarians (especially the Suevi, and then the Goths), and to the periodic peasants' revolts of the so-called *Bagaudae*, which involved heresy and dealings with the barbarians. In this context he does not seem to be aware of the bitter rivalry between Aetius and Valentinian III, but mentions them both as symbols of a Rome still capable of guarding in some way the distant provincials of Galicia, and he always applauds the diplomacy of Censorius, who was the expert of Aetius for Iberian affairs.[78]

It is precisely because Hydatius belonged to the same world as Orosius, a single *societas Romana*, which for them was irreplaceable, that explains their opposing states of mind: Orosius was as optimistic in 417 as Hydatius was pessimistic in 469. The work culminates in the end of the dynasty of Theodosius in 455 and the entry of the Goths under Theodoric II into Spain in 456, formally on behalf of the imperial power, actually to fill the gap left by Rome.[79] Thus, for Hydatius, 455/456 is the turning-point of the age, and, more particularly, the tragic moment of the *finis Romae*.

However, the end of Rome should coincide with the end of the world, because, as Orosius opined and Augustine did not, life is inconceivable without Rome. In fact, it is possible that the gloomy portents foretelling misfortune and catastrophy, recorded in punctilious detail under the years 468/469, form the prelude to the coming of the Antichrist and the *finis temporum*, which had been fixed by an apocryphal *Apocalypse* for 482.[80] It also possible that in those sad times

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[77] Burgess, *op. cit.*, 10 states excessively: "Hydatius is the best Latin historian to survive between Ammianus Marcellinus and Gregory of Tours": what about Orosius?

[78] Only E.A. Thompson, *Romans and Barbarians* (Madison, 1982), 142 has detected anti-Aetian sentiments in Hydatius. He fails to convince.

[79] It is significant that the *Chronicon* opens with the theme of the untrustworthiness of the Goths (7) and closes on that of their cruelty (250).

[80] Thus Burgess, *op. cit.*, 8–9.

Hydatius forced himself to hope in the improbable recovery of Rome and, in particular, in the new emperor of the West, Anthemius.[81]

The fact remains that the pessimism of the *Chronicon* puts its nostalgic author in a world that has vanished. A century and a half would pass before Spanish chronography, in the works of John of Biclar and, above all, of Isidore of Seville, was transformed into the historiography of the Visigoths.[82]

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[81] Thus Muhlberger, *op. cit.*, 260–266.

[82] Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 234–240. For John of Biclar references are obviously to the second and last part of his *Chronicle* (579–590), written after his return to Spain from Byzantium in 576.

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——, "S. Ambrogio e le origini del motivo della vittoria incruenta", *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia* 38 (1984), 391–404.
——, *Ricerche di storiografia latina tardoantica* (Rome, 1993).
——, "I Tyranni triginta: la scelta di un numero e le sue implicazioni", *Historiae Augustae Colloquium Bonnense* (Bari, 1997), 265–274.
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PART THREE

CHAPTER ELEVEN

LATIN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE BARBARIAN KINGDOMS

Brian Croke

From the early-520s to the mid-560s the Roman emperor Justinian at Constantinople was constantly confronting the past. As a Latin speaker with ambitions to promote doctrinal unity and to re-establish Roman authority in former imperial domains, at least in Italy and Africa, he inherited a realm in which power had been dispersed from an imperial centre at Rome or Ravenna to local and regional bases. The apparatus of Roman government continued to function, but authority resided ultimately in either the kings of the nations now settled in Italy, Spain and Gaul, or the warlords who held sway throughout Britain. While the imperial domain was no longer unified politically it was still bound with strong cultural and religious threads and, west of Constantinople, with Latin as a common language for most discourse. Across the varying communities of Latin speakers was also spread a common understanding of the past, and its direction, which is reflected in the various sixth-century Latin historians. This chapter is concerned with surveying the works of these historians (the anonymous Italian writer of the *Excerpta Valesiana*, Cassiodorus, Jordanes, Gildas and Gregory of Tours) with a focus on how they conceptualised and executed their historiographical task, as well as how their audience and purpose influenced their historical narratives.

As investigations of sixth century culture and society have begun to displace explanatory paradigms of decline and fall with those of change and continuity, the focus has now shifted to understanding the development of Christian literary culture and to delineating its distinctive and novel features.[1] The sixth century Latin historical texts

[1] The various scholarly developments and themes impacting on the changing interpretation of the sixth century Latin historians are synthesised in P. Heather, "Late Antiquity and the Early Medieval West" in: M. Bentley (ed.), *Companion to*

are beginning to benefit from this scholarly revaluation. Recently, research has begun to change significantly the traditional understanding of all these writers.[2] Emphasis is now being placed on characterising and appreciating their literary culture, as well as their independent role as serious, purposeful authors. In addition, our understanding of their context is being enriched by new insights into the construction of ethnic and other identities in late antiquity, and how this can impel and influence historiographical reinterpretation.[3] Equally important for understanding the sixth century Latin historians has been the development of a more refined approach to the forms and constraints of oral, and written, culture and how they interacted.[4]

In accommodating the pattern and meaning of past events to their current circumstances, the sixth century Latin historians drew on long-established interpretations and models of the past developed by Christian scholars, especially Eusebius of Caesarea early in the fourth century and Augustine of Hippo early in the fifth. By the sixth century, however, the sharp distinctions between church and state, between sacred and profane, and between 'Roman' and 'barbarian', with which Eusebius and Augustine had grappled, had given way to a more integrated view of public and private life in a Christian world. As past, present and future had become more naturally joined in a Christian empire, rulers such as Justinian had to compete for loyalty with new allegiances based on doctrinal, regional and cultural affinities.[5]

Historiography (London, 1997), 69–87 and Averil Cameron, "The Perception of Crisis" in: *Morphologie sociali e culturali in Europa fra tarda antichità e alto medievo* Settimane di Studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 45 (Spoleto, 1998), 9–31. Also germane are the contributions of Heather and Cameron, along with that of Ian Wood, to the debate: "The World of Late Antiquity Revisited", *Symbolae Osloenses* 72 (1997), 5–89, especially 33–37 (Cameron), 48–52 (Heather), and 65–69 (Wood).

[2] Fundamental is W. Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History* (Princeton, 1988).

[3] The relevant issues are accessible through W. Pohl, *Kingdoms of the Empire: The Integration of Barbarians in Late Antiquity* (Transformation of the Roman World, Vol. 1) (Leiden, 1997), P. Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489–554* (Cambridge, 1997) and P.J. Geary, 'Barbarians and Ethnicity' in: G.W. Bowersock/P. Brown/O. Grabar (eds.), *Late Antiquity. A Guide to the Postclassical World* (Cambridge, Mass./London, 1999), 107–129.

[4] M. Banniard, *Viva voce: communication écrite et communication orale du IV^e^ au IX^e^ siècle en Occident latin* (Paris, 1992); M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West: Studies in the Oral Culture of the Barbarians* (Dublin, 1994); P. Heather, "Literacy and Power in the Migration Period" in: A. Bowman/G. Woolf (eds.), *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 1994), 177–197; and, B. Stock, *Listening for the Text. On the Uses of The Past* (Philadelphia, 1996).

[5] W. Goffart, "Rome, Constantinople and the Barbarians", *American Historical*

In the former imperial territories, the changing configuration of past and present gave rise to the creation of new angles from which to view the previous story of Roman continuity and destiny. Cassiodorus, writing in the 520s, Gildas and the anonymous author of the *Excerpta Valesiana* in the 530s/40s and Jordanes in the early 550s all fall within the reign of Justinian. Probably none of these writers was alive when there was still a Roman emperor in Italy. Their contemporary experience and perspective formed, and informed, their historical writings. Theirs was a world in which power and influence still resided in the local land-owning aristocracies exercising their traditional sway as civic or military potentates or, increasingly, as bishops. However, there were new national and ethnic groupings which now belonged to the Roman story. By the end of the sixth century Gregory of Tours, who had begun his extensive literary work just after the death of Justinian, could produce a history which focussed almost entirely on his local world and its preoccupations.

The sixth century Latin historians worked within the Christian historiographical tradition which had developed a total written account of the whole of the human record, buttressed by the concept of a teleological progression of time.[6] This understanding and presentation of the past was contained mainly in the chronicles written successively from the fourth to the sixth centuries.[7] The chronicles, as with the histories of Cassiodorus, Jordanes, Gildas and Gregory of Tours, had also to accommodate non-Roman cultures such as the Goths and Franks who originally had no comparable sense of the

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Review 86 (1981), 275–306 (reprinted in: W. Goffart, *Rome's Fall and After* (London, 1989), 1–32, especially 22–27); R.A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990), 85–136.

[6] B. Croke/A. Emmett, "Historiography in Late Antiquity: An Overview" in: B. Croke/A. Emmett (eds.), *History and Historians in Late Antiquity* (Sydney-Oxford, 1983), 1–12.

[7] The main recent studies of the Latin chronicles are S. Muhlberger, *The Fifth Century Chroniclers* (Leeds, 1990); M. Salzman, *On Roman Time. The Codex Calendar of 354* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1990); K. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool, 1990); R. Burgess, *The 'Chronicle' of Hydatius and the 'Chronica Constantinopolitana'* (Oxford, 1993); J. Favrod, *La 'Chronique' de Marius d'Avenches* (Lausanne, 1993); C. Cardelle de Hartmann, *Philologische Studien zur Chronik des Hydatius von Chaves* (Stuttgart, 1994); B. Croke, *The Chronicle of Marcellinus* (Sydney, 1995); A. Placanica, *Vittore da Tunnuna, Chronica. Chiesa e impero nell'età di Giustiniano* (Florence, 1997), and B. Croke, *Count Marcellinus and his Chronicle* (Oxford, 2001).

future direction of time, let alone the sort of historiographical models which they encountered in the literate Roman culture.

Excerpta Valesiana

A good deal of our knowledge of the Roman west in the fifth and sixth centuries has had to be inferred or reconstructed from anonymous excerpts and fragments of manuscripts of later centuries, sometimes much later. One of these manuscripts is *Cod. Berol. Phillipps 1885*, a 9th century manuscript which contains a series of excerpts of various Roman and early-medieval works, such as Jerome's *Chronicle* and Eutropius' *Breviarium*. Among these extracts is one headed *item ex libris chronicorum inter cetera*. Whether the extracting was undertaken originally by the author of *Cod. Berol. Phillipps 1885*, or whether he was merely copying a previous excerptor, the original excerpted work evidently carried *libri chronicorum* or *chronica* in its title. In other words, here is an extract from the sort of work we define as a chronicle, that is, a text generally setting out (in chronological order) a summary of events over a period of time and culminating in the period of the author. Defining the historiographical context of this text requires prior consideration of its manuscript tradition.[8]

What has given the *Cod. Berol. Phillipps 1885* extracts their significance is that they are plainly from a sixth century work which contains information not otherwise recorded in extant documentation from the period. This excerpt, or rather series of excerpts, together with another anonymous excerpt from later in the same manuscript (covering the family of Constantine and from some unknown fourth century work),[9] were first printed together at Paris in 1636 by Henri de Valois (Valesius). In 1681 the excerpts were incorporated into the edition of Ammianus Marcellinus printed by his brother Hadrian de Valois. Thereafter, these two separate, and otherwise unrelated, excerpts have continued to be known as the *Anonymus Valesianus* or *Excerpta Valesiana*, with the consequence that scholars have frequently been mislead into thinking both sets of excerpts are by the same author, or from the same work of the same period. More precisely,

[8] Textual and publication details in I. König, *Origo Constantini Imperatoris, Anonymus Valesianus: Text und Kommentar*, 11 (Trier, 1987), 2–4.

[9] On the first part of the *Excerpta* see above, F. Winckelmann, in Part I, Chapter 1.

however, the sixth-century excerpt under scrutiny here has been labelled as 'Anonymus Valesianus. Pars Posterior' or 'Anonymus Valesianus II'. For the sake of clarity and consistency it will be referred to here as the '*Excerpta*' and its author as the 'Anonymus'.

The section of the Berlin manuscript of the *Excerpta* covering Theodoric was subsequently used in the creation of a later (12th century) compilation of historical extracts now in *Vat.Pal.Lat.* 927 but not copied directly from the Berlin manuscript.[10] The possibilities with the Berlin manuscript's *ex libris chronicorum* section, the *Excerpta*, are that we are dealing with either (a) a direct ninth-century excerpt from one or more sixth century works; or, (b) an already interpolated and edited sixth century work copied in the ninth century; or, (c) a ninth century summary or reworking of one or more earlier works. It is assumed, in the foregoing, that (a) is the most likely possibility so that the *Excerpta* represents a direct excerpt (or series of excerpts) from an earlier work. However, it has to be acknowledged that if the manuscript heading (*ex libris chronicorum*) is literally correct then the excerptor of the Berlin manuscript may have culled material from more than one chronicle or chronicle manuscript. Since the *Excerpta* constitutes an anonymous excerpt from an unknown author (or authors), of unknown date, there are many fundamental questions to be addressed.

The *Excerpta* covers the period from the elevation of Julius Nepos as emperor in the west in 474 to the death of the Gothic king Theodoric in 526.[11] The greater part of the work is related to Theodoric thereby justifying the frequent title *Chronica Theodericana*. As for the structure of the *Excerpta*, while the original work (or works) excerpted may well have ended where the ninth-century excerpt terminates in 526, it (or they) clearly did not begin where the excerpt now begins in 474. The very first word of the excerpt (*igitur*) suggests that an explanatory link was being made to previous content in the original, while shortly afterwards the Roman general and tribal

[10] J.N. Adams, *The Text and Language of a Vulgar Latin Chronicle (Anonymus Valesianus II)* (London, 1977), 17–20.

[11] The critical text of the *Excerpta* is available in Jean Moreau/V. Velkov (eds.) *Excerpta Valesiana* (Leipzig, 1968) and now, with commentary, in I. König, *Aus der Zeit Theoderichs des Grossen: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar einer anonymen Quelle* (Darmstadt, 1997). See also W. Bracke, *L'anonymus Valesianus II. Ch. 79–96 texte et commentaire* (Bologna, 1992). A brief summary of opinion on relevant issues is in J. Gruber, "Anonymus Valesianus", *Lexikon des Mittelalters* I, (1980), 675.

leader Odoacer is introduced for the first time without any word of explanation (*exc.Val.*, 37). The implication here is that this was not the first time Odoacer was mentioned in the original work. The order of the excerpts, and what this says about the original process of excerpting, have been extensively studied and many proposals, some more radical than others, have been made for re-ordering the excerpts in line with modern expectations of sound chronological order.[12] While some of these attempts may now look misguided the fact remains that there are some uncomfortable transitions from one paragraph to the next (e.g. *exc.Val.*, 78 to 79) which suggests omissions from the original, and there are sections (e.g. *exc.Val.*, 53–6) which clearly look like interpolations from some other document. Overall, however, unity and continuity of style and language are identifiable,[13] and the course of events does make sense without having to re-order the paragraphs.[14]

Since the *Excerpta* contains both a strongly positive evaluation of Theodoric (e.g. *exc.Val.*, 59–73) and a strongly negative one (e.g. *exc.Val.*, 79, 83–96) it has occasionally been suggested that the Anonymus uncritically combined material from two separate original documents, one laudatory of Theodoric and one hostile to him.[15] This is misleading. The excerpt preserves a unified account of Theodoric, with the contrasting interpretations explained by the author's purpose in describing how Arianism brought catastrophe to such a great king.[16] The overall design of the material in the *Excerpta* is based on dividing the 33 years of Theodoric's rule (*exc.Val.*, 59) into 30 good years and 3 rather bad years, with the thirty three years being calculated from 493, the year Theodoric was recognised by the emperor Anastasius as ruler of Italy for the time being (cf. *exc.Val.*, 64). The conceptual unity of the work is reinforced by the

[12] Most recently by C. Morton, "Marius of Avenches, the '*Excerpta* Valesiana' and the Death of Boethius", *Traditio* 38 (1982), 107–136.

[13] The case for the *Excerpta* being a more coherent, consistent and stable document is cogently argued by Adams, *op. cit.*, 3–4 and S.J.B. Barnish, "The Anonymus Valesianus II as a Source for the Last Years of Theoderic", *Latomus* 42 (1983), 572–596, especially 573–574.

[14] J. Moorhead, *Theoderic in Italy* (Oxford, 1992), 261–262.

[15] Clearly stated (with earlier literature) in C.H. Coster, *Late Roman Studies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 71ff.

[16] Barnish, "Anonymus Valesianus II", 573; H. Chadwick, *Boethius. The Consolations of Music, Logic, Theology and Philosophy* (Oxford, 1981), 291 n. 67.

clear indications of the Anonymus cross-referencing his material (at *exc.Val.*, 41 and 45).

Then there is the question of what sort of work it is, that is, what literary models or genres the author was consciously following. It has been proposed that the *Excerpta* is modelled on Suetonius,[17] but also suggested that it is an ill-fitting medley of different late antique genres and narrative patterns covering chronicle-like material (*exc.Val.*, 36–59), biography (*exc.Val.*, 60–79) and Christian history (*exc.Val.*, 80–96) in the Orosian tradition.[18] As *libri chronicorum* or *chronica* the *Excerpta* has affinities to the chronicle of Prosper, while its partly annalistic and partly biographical format is reminiscent of Jordanes' *Romana* which its author labelled as an *adbreviatio chronicorum* (*Goth.*, *praef.*) and which is organised by successive reigns. In other words, the *Excerpta* simply reflects a fluidity of genre, drawing on a variety of models, and a loose episodic style which is characteristic of late antique historiography, without requiring more rigid categorisation.

The original work utilised in the *Excerpta* was most likely written in the sixth century. While the *Excerpta* postdates the death of Theodoric in 526 it need not be much later. It has been claimed that certain phrases and anecdotes (e.g. *exc.Val.*, 61–2) suggest immediacy or oral traditions which would not be circulating too long after the lifetime of Theodoric.[19] There is, however, no sense of contemporaneity or engagement with the events described. The descriptions of events do not strike one as absolutely fresh, but as sufficiently past to be viewed with some detachment. The reference to Theodoric's successors as inheriting peace (*exc.Val.*, 59) may denote the period up to 535 and indicate that, with the occupation of Italy by Justinian's army, the peace has now receded. The fact that some of Theodoric's maxims were still repeated (*usque nunc: exc.Val.*, 61) suggests that the Anonymus belongs a generation or so after his death.

Even if we concede that the work was composed in the 530s or 540s, it is not clear where it was written. One possibility is Constantinople, as recently suggested,[20] but that depends on how one

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[17] Barnish, "Anonymus Valesianus II", 575.

[18] G. Zecchini, "L'Anonimo Valesiano II: Genere Storiografico e contesto politico", in: *Teoderico il grande e i goti d'Italia (Atti del XIII Congresso internazionale di studi sull'Alto Medioevo)*, Centro Italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo (Spoleto, 1993), 809–818.

[19] Adams, *op. cit.*, 5–6.

[20] Moorhead, *Theoderic*, 261.

judges the geographical balance of the *Excerpta*. Indeed, the balance of east and west is a key structural element which has been variously interpreted. The eastern events are not predominant. The positive evaluation of the emperor Zeno suggests a western perspective, not least because it focusses on the public acknowledgment of Zeno at Rome (*exc.Val.*, 44). Otherwise, Zeno forms a point of reference for the arrival of Theodoric in Italy (*exc.Val.*, 49), followed by the death of Zeno (*exc.Val.*, 56) and Theodoric's reconciliation with Anastasius (*exc.Val.*, 64). Then there is the story of Anastasius' nephews and the accession of Justin (*exc.Val.*, 74–7) and Pope John's encounter with Justin in Constantinople (88). Structurally these eastern events appear to fit within an overall framework that was focussed on the west. The sections on Zeno and Basiliscus (*exc.Val.*, 39–44) are a digression and the reader's attention back to the main text is highlighted by the transition to Odoacer *cuius supra fecimus mentionem* (*exc.Val.*, 45). Similarly, the sections on Anastasius and Justin (*exc.Val.*, 74–8) are sandwiched between those on Theodoric's benefits to the cities of Italy (*exc.Val.*, 73) and his use of a stencil (*exc.Val.*, 79).

The Italian tendency of the work suggests that it was composed in the west, rather than at Constantinople, and a more likely place of writing is Ravenna. Firstly, Ravenna played a central role in the struggle between Odoacer and Theodoric for mastery of Italy (*exc.Val.*, 50ff.). Then Theodoric was based at Ravenna (*exc.Val.*, 70, 88, 92) and was responsible for considerable construction there: palace, colonnade, repaired aqueduct (*exc.Val.*, 71) and mausoleum (*exc.Val.*, 96). At Ravenna too is noted a prodigious birth (*exc.Val.*, 84) and the hostility of the locals towards the Jews resulting in the destruction of their synagogue (81–2). At Verona attention is again reserved for Theodoric's presence there (*exc.Val.*, 81) and for his building program (*exc.Val.*, 71), on the same pattern as at Ravenna (palace, colonnades, walls, aqueduct). At Pavia Theodoric's presence is noted (*exc.Val.*, 87) and his construction there (palace, baths, amphitheatre, walls) is singled out (*exc.Val.*, 71). Apart from the priority of local needs, this north Italian concentration may also suggest the author's immediate locality.

In terms of religious inclination, the Anonymus was suspicious of Theodoric's son-in-law Eutharic because of his hostility to the Catholic faith (*exc.Val.*, 80), while Theodoric himself is judged as someone who left Catholics alone (*exc.Val.*, 60) and had respect for Peter (*exc.Val.*, 65). After 523, however, he was no longer a *dei amicus* (*exc.Val.*, 88).

The author's strong religious viewpoint is embodied in his resort to explanation through the sharp contrast of God[21] versus the devil.[22] Failure to appreciate the Anonymus' simplistic approach to events has given rise to attempts to see all manner of subtlety and ideology in the *Excerpta*'s account of the deaths of Boethius and Symmachus. Rather than a studied analysis, the author provides the sort of compressed account acceptable to his audience. It is therefore partly fiction, partly oral, and not based at all on Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*.[23] Further, there is no cogency in the proposal that the Anonymus can be located within the sphere of influence of the Roman aristocratic family of the Anicii. It has been suggested that the quotation from Eugippius' *Life of Severinus* (*exc.Val.*, 45–7) is a telltale sign of Anician influence and ideology because the Anicii were especially attached to Severinus, and that the Anonymus was an Italian exile who wrote at Constantinople around 540 and whose work saved Jordanes from having to provide a detailed account of Theodoric's rule.[24] This compound of hypotheses is extremely tenuous and rather unlikely.

The author of the excerpted work could be summed up as strongly Catholic, writing in Ravenna in the mid-sixth century, acutely conscious of the unity of Empire and the connection of east and west. Moreover, he identifies as Roman (*exc.Val.*, 82, 83, 85, 86) and a supporter of Pope Symmachus (*exc.Val.*, 65). This raises the possibility that the excerpt was taken from the lost *chronica* of Maximian, bishop of Ravenna (546–53). Maximian's work is known only from its later description by Agnellus who says that, following Jerome, Orosius and other historians, *iste in chronicis laboravit, et ipsos secutus per diversos libros nobiliorum principum, non solum ipsorum imperatorum sed et regum et praefectorum, suam propriam chronicam exaravit.*[25] Although it has been discounted on several occasions, the possibility that part, or all, of the *Excerpta* is by Maximian cannot be eliminated entirely and has some qualities to recommend it. Maximian was writing at Ravenna, as an anti-Arian Catholic, and his work was structured according to

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[21] *Ordinante deo* (65); *deo iuvante* (66); *annuente deo* (85); *sed deus qui fideles cultores suos non deserit* (90); *sed qui non patitur fideles cultores suos ab alienigenis opprimi* (95).
[22] *Temptans eum diabolus* (78); *invenit diabolus locum* (83).
[23] Barnish, "Anonymus Valesianus II", 589–595.
[24] Zecchini, "L'Anonimo Valesiano", 813–817.
[25] Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, 78.

the reigns of emperors and kings such as Theodoric. In terms of the flexible historiographical design, format and nomenclature of the period, the *Excerpta* could certainly be labelled with Maximian's title of *chronica*.

In any event, the original sixth century work from which the *Excerpta* is extracted shows how the reign of Theodoric was presented under his successors. It combines material from memory and oral traditions with written documents such as Eugippius' *Life of Severinus*. The *Excerpta* makes sense of events at a time when Justinian was engaged in re-establishing direct imperial administration in Italy after seventy years. This was the very point when Italy was reconnected to its Roman past and when the imperial story required the incorporation of the Goths. The Anonymus, living and working within the orbit of the Gothic court at Ravenna may well have known a more famous servant of the Gothic kings and one who was a close witness to many of the events described in the *Excerpta*—Cassiodorus.

Cassiodorus

Born in the late 480s, Cassiodorus would scarcely have remembered when the Goth Theodoric led his army into Italy in 489 and overthrew Odoacer. Growing up in an aristocratic household, marked by a long tradition of civic service, he was surrounded by the past and the fundamental questions it provoked. At the same time he knew only the regime of Theodoric. Within his own family there was a rich storehouse of memory and tradition to absorb. His domestic historical education included his great-grandfather's organisation of the local defences of Bruttium against a raid by the Vandals in the early 440s which he recalled for Theodoric in addressing the senate in 507 (*Variae*, 1.4.14). His grandfather had accompanied the Roman general Aetius' son Carpilio on an embassy to the Huns in the 430s where he successfully negotiated directly with their king Attila (*Variae*, 1.4.10–11.13). Cassiodorus could therefore trace close connections with the imperial world which had now slipped away in Italy.

Cassiodorus' father followed his own father and grandfather into a traditional aristocratic life of leisure and public service, but under Odoacer and Theodoric, rather than Roman emperors, rising to be Prefect of Italy (*Variae*, 1.3–4). So, it was scarcely surprising for

Cassiodorus 'Senator' to follow his father's example. He will have known Theodoric and his household as long as he could remember. Apart from being close to events, he acted as *consiliarius* to his father as Prefect (ca. 503–7) and was then offered the position of *quaestor palatii* after Theodoric heard him deliver a panegyric on the Gothic king (*Variae*, 9.24.3). Even at this relatively young age Cassiodorus was considered remarkable for his learning and his rhetorical skill. In short, he was a typical product of the traditional Roman education still available in Italy. Such an education would have familiarised him with the canon of historical texts and exemplary figures of the Roman past. His speeches and letters evince a wide range of historical reading including writers of recent centuries—Ammianus, Aurelius Victor and Orosius for example.[26] Moreover, he would later summon up 'revered antiquity' (*antiquitas honora*) to demonstrate firm views on the quality of the Roman administration by castigating Galla Placidia and her son Valentinian III for their weakening of Roman power and influence in Italy (*Variae*, 11.1.9–12). Within such a household and such a family Cassiodorus could both read about the past and hear about it at first hand. At the same time, all his life Cassiodorus will have heard Gothic spoken around him, all his life he knew Goths and will have learned about them, their traditions and their history, before and after they entered Italy. Even at a young age, therefore, Cassiodorus was well-qualified to produce an historical account of events in Italy and the west in the previous century as well as an account of the Goths derived from both written records and oral traditions.[27]

From the formative ages of eight to eighteen, Theodoric himself had been exposed to a Roman education at Constantinople, certainly in Latin and most probably in Greek as well. He was himself well enough equipped to engage with the young Cassiodorus on a range of topics (*Variae*, praef. 8). Indeed, as Cassiodorus explains, he and Theodoric held memorable discussions (*gloriosa colloquia*) which may well have included the sort of historical models to which Theodoric aspired (*Variae*, 9.24.8). Being educated in a Christian household Cassiodorus will also have learned how Rome's past fitted into the context of world history. This historical vision was to be

[26] P.J. Heather, "The Historical Culture of Ostrogothic Italy" in: *XIII Congresso internazionale di studi sull'Alto Medioevo* (Spoleto, 1993), 321.

[27] Ibid., 317–20.

found in the Bible and filled out in the by now standard works of Christian history, namely the chronicle of Jerome and the History of Orosius.

Like his father, Cassiodorus also enjoyed the title, or the position, of governor of Bruttium and Lucania (507–11), then as consul in 514 he surpassed the previous generations of his family and became one of the leading figures within the cultural and political orbit of the Gothic court. In 519 Theodoric's son-in-law Eutharic became consul and Cassiodorus responded to Eutharic's request to produce a chronicle which would culminate in his consulship. He claims that he was responding to a request to set out the list of consuls in order to accentuate the dignity of Eutharic's name not only for the current year but for its addition to such a distinguished historical record (*in ordinem me consules digerere censuisitis, ut qui annum ornaveratis glorioso nomine, redderitis fastis veritatis pristinae dignitatem*). He then goes on to express the hope that Eutharic will take delight in the outstanding events briefly noted in the course of covering the whole of human history (*quatenus vester animus per inlustres delectatus eventus blando compendio longissimam mundi percurrat aetatem*).

The chronicle is based on a clear chronological framework, summarised at the end of the chronicle as totalling 5721 years. Events are recorded spasmodically but more frequently towards the end. For the most part, Cassiodorus simply summarises the entries in Prosper's *Chronicle*, omitting ecclesiastical and hagiographical notices, and a similar document for the period beyond Prosper although it cannot be directly linked with any of the extant manuscripts which continue Prosper. Cassiodorus provides summary entries even for events he will have known in considerable detail through his own family tradition such as the raids of Vandals in Italy and Sicily (s.a. 440, 441). On the other hand, he occasionally modifies Prosper to the advantage of the Goths: Athanaric's murder is glossed over (382), the battle of Pollentia is recast as a Gothic victory (402), Alaric's clemency in the sack of Rome is highlighted (410), the Goths become responsible for pushing the Vandals out of Spain (427), Aetius' victory over the Huns was achieved "by Gothic might" but he fails to note that Theodoric's forebears fought beside the Huns (451). For the period after 455, where Prosper's chronicle terminates, Cassiodorus continues his selective and partial record. Theodoric's murder of Odoacer, for example, is justified as a defence against treachery (493). The only notices thereafter relate to Theodoric's celebratory visit to

Rome in 500, the refurbishment of Ravenna's aqueduct (502), the securing of territory from the Franks (508), the restoration of ecclesiastical harmony at Rome during Cassiodorus' consulship (514) the marriage of Eutharic (515) and Eutharic's acceptance of the consulship (518). Cassiodorus' chronicle derives its significance and its lasting value from the way it delineates the relation of Romans and Goths over time, and how it interprets key events in the establishment of Gothic identity and authority within the Roman realm.

A few years after fulfilling the demand to produce his *Chronicle* Cassiodorus found himself faced with another unavoidable commission. This time it was Theodoric himself posing the challenge of a treatise on the origins and history of the Gothic nation. The choice of Cassiodorus for this task presumably lies in their previous conversations on the Roman and Gothic past (*Variae*, 9.24.8). Cassiodorus' *Gothic History* (probably entitled *de origine actusque Gothorum*) does not survive. So its contents and scope, even its purpose and context, have to be inferred. To begin with, there is the summary statement contained in the review of the works of various contemporary writers which goes under the name of the *Ordo generis Cassiodororum* or the *Anecdoton Holderi* (after its original editor) and which was written about 537. This document indicates simply that Cassiodorus' history was in twelve books, covered Gothic history, topography and ethnography, and was written at the behest of Theodoric: *scripsit praecipiente Theodoricho rege historiam Gothicam originem et loca mores in libris annuntians*.[28]

Besides the *Ordo* we have the words of the author himself in describing his own history in various parts of his formal letters known as the *Variae*. In the preface to the *Variae* published in 538 Cassiodorus refers to the success of his *duodecim libris Gothorum historiam defloratis prosperitatibus*. A fuller account of his *Gothic History* is to be found in the letter he wrote for the Gothic king Athalaric to address the senate (on 31 August 533) on Cassiodorus' own appointment as Praetorian Prefect of Italy:

> He extended his labours even to our remote ancestry, learning by his reading (*lectione discens*) that which the old knowledge of our ancestors

[28] Edited by A. Galonnier, "Anecdoton Holderi ou Ordo Generis Cassiodororum. Introduction, édition, traduction et commentaire", *Antiquité tardive* 4 (1996), 299–312 at 306.

> (*maiorum notitia cana*) scarcely recalled. He elicited from their hiding-place the kings of the Goths, concealed by long forgetfulness. He restored the Amals with the full splendor of their line, proving clearly that our lineage has been royal for seventeen generations. He made Roman history of the origin of the Goths (*originem Gothicam historiam fecit esse Romanam*), as if gathering into a single wreath the flowering fruits that had previously been completely spread across fields of books. Consider how much he delighted you in praising us, he who showed the antique wonder of your prince's nation, so that just as you have always been considered noble by your ancestors, so an ancient race of kings still rules you (*Variae*, 9.25).

The assembled senators were meant to recall, if they were familiar with the history, how Cassiodorus uncovered a long and noble past for the Goths by applying his extensive reading (*lectione discens*) to supplement the *maiorum notitia cana*. In particular, they could now see how to trace the Amal royal family over seventeen generations.

Scholars have long wrestled with the understanding and implications of most aspects of Cassiodorus' description of his history. Issue is taken with the nature and timing of Theodoric's request, the size of the twelve books, the resort to 'reading', and the meaning of the key phrase *originem Gothicam historiam fecit esse Romanam*. By saying that he wrote at Theodoric's behest Cassiodorus may have meant that he began to take up the challenge immediately, that is to say before the death of Theodoric in 526. Certainly, it does not mean that the work was necessarily completed by 526.[29] The length of the work depends on the size of each of the twelve books which could have been large (on the model of Livy's history) or relatively small (on the model of Eutropius' *Breviarium*). It is impossible to be certain. The 'reading' Cassiodorus undertook was probably of those Latin and Greek authors who were useful in providing direct or indirect information on the Goths' history, origins, locations and customs (*historiam Gothicam, originem loca mores*). He would therefore have utilised the histories of Tacitus, Ammianus, Eutropius and Orosius, the poetry of Claudian, the chronicles of Jerome, Prosper and others, as well as ethnographic works such as that of the elusive Ablabius.[30] The most significant and programmatic statement, namely that he turned 'Gothic history into Roman' is more difficult to interpret. Cassiodorus

[29] Argued by S. Krautschick, *Cassiodor und die Politik seiner Zeit* (Bonn, 1983), 21–40 (cf. Goffart, *Narrators*, 32).

[30] As explained by A. Gillett, "Jordanes and Ablabius", *Collection Latomus* 254 (2000), 479–500.

may be referring to the work's pattern and narrative structure, that is turning Gothic history into a series of biographies of leaders, on the model of Roman historians such as Aurelius Victor;[31] or, he may be implying that Goths are now historically superior to Roman senators.[32] It is more likely, however, that he meant the inclusion of classical elements and episodes into the long period of Gothic history and the integration of Gothic traditions into the chronology of Roman history.[33] This would follow naturally from his reading.

Although the *Gothic History* does not survive, it was used in the next generation by Jordanes writing his own account of the origins and history of the Goths for a local Constantinopolitan audience in 551. Jordanes' audience possessed a very different perspective on Gothic government and authority to that held by Cassiodorus who was writing in Italy when the Gothic regime was securely established. By contrast, Jordanes' readers looked to the imminent demise of the Gothic regime in Italy and the triumph of the emperor Justinian in reuniting Italy under imperial administration. They found in Jordanes a tale of Gothic deceit, disloyalty and rebellion. At the very least, the original history of Cassiodorus would have required considerable adaptation by Jordanes to suit contemporary circumstances in 551.[34]

Jordanes tells us that he was in the course of writing something else when he was forced to interrupt his work in response to another, evidently more urgent, request. This time a certain Castalius (*frater Castalii Goth.*, 1) sought from Jordanes a summary of Cassiodorus' twelve book history (*ut nostris verbis duodecem Senatoris volumina de origine actusque Getarum ab olim et usque nunc per generationes regesque descendentem*). Then Jordanes explains how he has gone about this task. His exact words, variously interpreted by scholars in modern times, bear close scrutiny:

> The overriding burden, however, is that I have no opportunity of using the history in order to attend to his meaning. Still, to speak truthfully, through the favor of his steward I previously read through the history over a three-day reading period (*ad triduanam lectionem*). Although I do

[31] Goffart, *Narrators*, 36–7.
[32] Amory, *People and Identity*, 74.
[33] Heather, "Historical Culture", 348.
[34] W. Goffart, "Two Notes on Germanic Antiquity Today", *Traditio* 51 (1995), 21–22.

> not recall the words, nevertheless I believe I preserve intact its meaning and narrative (*sensus tamen et res actas*). To this I have also added relevant material from several Greek and Latin histories, while mixing in a beginning, a conclusion and a good deal in between in my own words (*initium finemque et plura in medio mea dictione permiscens*). So without reproach gladly take up what you have commissioned and read with pleasure. If anything is not sufficiently described and you, as a neighbour of the race (*vicinus genti*), recall it, then add it, while praying for me dearest brother. The Lord be with you. Amen. (*Goth.*, 2–3)

On this interpretation, Jordanes is not using anything other than the history written by Cassiodorus more than two decades earlier. He explains that he does not currently have access to Cassiodorus' work. Rather, he had once borrowed it through Cassiodorus' own steward but had only had use of it for three days (*ad triduanam lectionem*). Now that he was required to provide a summary version of it he could but recall only the general drift and the events (*sensus . . . et res actas*) of Cassiodorus' narrative, not the actual text (*verba*). Accordingly, he was obliged to supplement Cassiodorus by adding an introduction, a continuation (presumably from the period where Cassiodorus had finished, perhaps 526) and a certain amount of supplementary information for the period covered by Cassiodorus. Since Cassiodorus was himself in Constantinople from the mid 540s it would have been there that Jordanes borrowed the *Gothic History*. That is to say, Jordanes' original three-day loan of the history for his own reading could have occurred at any time from the mid-540s, and could well have been some years before the present time of writing in 551. Moreover, the work Jordanes borrowed at that stage would have been that originally completed by Cassiodorus in Italy before 533.

It has been strenuously argued, however, that Cassiodorus produced a revised version of his history in 551 precisely, just before Jordanes wrote, and that it was this version which Jordanes borrowed from Cassiodorus' steward before later summarising and excerpting it in his own *Getica*. The key elements proffered in arguing this hypothesis are that only Cassiodorus could have described the birth of Germanus in 551 as a union of the Anician and Amal dynasties, and that the updating of the *Gothic History* was inspired by the birth of Germanus and produced in order to propagate the cause of reconciliation in Italy symbolised by his birth.[35] The assumption that virtually all of

[35] Originally by A. Momigliano, "Cassiodorus and Italian Culture of His Time",

Jordanes' *Getica* originated with Cassiodorus has led to the work often being referred to in a hyphenated fashion ('Cassiodorus-Jordanes').[36] While a detailed consideration of this concatenation of hypotheses belongs more properly with Jordanes, it should be noted that the most recent research has progressively demonstrated how this interpretation is both implausible and unnecessary. It is based on the questionable assumptions that Jordanes cannot be taken seriously as an independent writer, that he merely copied and summarised Cassiodorus' history, and that only Cassiodorus could represent the birth of Germanus as signifying the unification of the Amal and Anician line.[37] In particular, an exegesis of Jordanes' preface demonstrates not only that he was closely copying the preface to Rufinus' translation of Origen's commentary on *Romans*. More importantly, it points to Jordanes' precise intention, that is, to freely and systematically add a range of relevant extracts from other authors to a loose abridgment of Cassiodorus, just as Rufinus did to Origen, rather than merely copying Cassiodorus word for word.[38]

Leaving aside the fact that Jordanes was using a work of Cassiodorus produced twenty or more years earlier, his self-declared reliance on Cassiodorus still implies that much of the *Getica* originated in Cassiodorus. However, precisely what *sensus et res actas* of Cassiodorus' history can be identified in the *Getica* remains a guess. There is no agreed methodology, or set of principles, for reliably ascribing particular parts of Jordanes' *Getica* to Cassiodorus. Attempts to identify verbatim extracts from Cassiodorus are likely to remain futile. One possible approach, comparing how the same events are described in both Cassiodorus' *Chronicle* and in Jordanes' *Getica* reveals consistent

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Proceedings of the British Academy 41 (1955), 207–245—most accessible in A. Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography* (London, 1966), 181–210; restated more recently by, for example, Barnish, "Anonymus Valesianus", 578 and H. Wolfram, *History of the Goths* (tr. T.J. Dunlap) (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 1988), 15.

[36] E.g. by H. Wolfram, *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples* (tr. T.J. Dunlap (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 1997), 26.

[37] L. Varady, "Jordanes-Studien. Jordanes und das Chronicon des Marcellinus Comes—Die Selbständigkeit des Jordanes", *Chiron* 6 (1976), 441–487; J.J. O'Donnell, "The Aims of Jordanes", *Historia* 31 (1982), 223–240; B. Croke, "Cassiodorus and the *Getica* of Jordanes", *Classical Philology* 82 (1987), 117–134 (rp. in B. Croke, *Christian Chronicles and Byzantine History, 5th–6th Centuries* [Aldershot, 1992]); Goffart, *Narrators*, 20–111; P. Heather, *Goths and Romans 332–489* (Oxford, 1991), 3–67; Amory, *People and Identity*, 291–307.

[38] Goffart, *Narrators*, 59–60.

differences.[39] These differences may be attributed to the different perspectives of Cassiodorus and Jordanes, rather than to Cassiodorus having changed his mind in the few years between the *Chronicle* and the *Gothic History*. Indeed, some statements in Jordanes' *Getica* are difficult to reconcile with even the little we know about the circumstances surrounding Cassiodorus' *Gothic History*. Be that as it may, what is likely is that the fundamental shape of Gothic history, the general chronological and geographical framework, was Cassiodoran. The *Getica* opens with a geographical introduction (4–24), followed by the origins and early history of the Goths and their migration from Scandza (25–43), then their settlements around Lake Maeotis (44–57), Thrace and Dacia (57–81), and in Scythia (82–130). At the point of their encounter with the Huns the *Getica* divides into two parts treating first what are called the Visigoths (131–245) and then the Ostrogoths (246–314) before the final conclusion (315–6). This particular layout, which has been that followed by most subsequent histories of the Goths down to the present, very likely reflects the structure of Cassiodorus' work—*originem, loca, mores*. Integral to this structure is the development of the lineage of the royal families of both the Visigoths (Balthi) and the Ostrogoths (Amali), especially the seventeen generations of the Amals. This lineage involved the insertion of several eponymous links and a spurious retrojection into the fourth century.[40]

Now that we understand better how these lineages were created and manipulated to meet the political and social circumstances of the Goths in the early sixth century, it appears even more likely that the codification of the Amal and Balth traditions to be found in the *Getica* were central to Cassiodorus' history, and not the invention of Jordanes.[41] Even so, as we shall see in discussing Jordanes, he did have independent personal access to the tales and traditions of the Amali as they were to be found in the lands left behind by Theodoric and his clan. Cassiodorus is probably also responsible for the interpretation of events surrounding the arrival of Theodoric in Italy, the eventual defeat and overthrow of Odoacer and the establishment of

[39] Croke, "Cassiodorus", 129–131; Goffart, *Narrators*, 40–41.

[40] P.J. Heather, "Cassiodorus and the Rise of the Amals: Genealogy and the Goths under Hun Domination", *Journal of Roman Studies* 79 (1989), 103–128, and "Theoderic, king of the Goths", *Early Medieval Europe* 4 (1995), 145–73, esp. 146–152.

[41] Wolfram, *History*, 30–31.

the Gothic regime (*Goth.*, 289–95). He may also be the origin of the account of Alaric's death and burial in the Cassiodorii's native Bruttium (*Goth.*, 137–8). Beyond the structure of the work, and the centrality of the Amal dynasty, it is difficult to be certain what else in the *Getica* was necessarily taken over from Cassiodorus.[42]

After Cassiodorus returned from Constantinople to Italy in the mid-550s or so, indeed after his mention of it to the senate some twenty years earlier in 533, he never referred to his *Gothic History* again. Perhaps he felt that its purpose and perspective had been overtaken by events, and that Justinian's reclamation of Italy involved the need to realign its past once more. This time the Gothic regime could be cast as just a brief interlude in the history of Italy. The histories of Jordanes reflect the movement in this direction.

Jordanes

At Constantinople in 551, at a time when Justinian was planning an all-out assault on the Goths,[43] Jordanes produced two works which were to prove popular and influential in subsequent generations. As already discussed, one broadly covered *Gothic History* (known by its short title *Getica*), while the other broadly covered Roman history to the mid-sixth century (known by its short title as the *Romana*). As their author, Jordanes has not traditionally enjoyed any sort of historical reputation mainly because of his Latinity and presumed dependence on Cassiodorus' *Gothic History* (in the *Getica*) and Symmachus' *Roman History* (in the *Romana*). However, as indicated previously, recent scholarship on Jordanes and related aspects of his historical works has highlighted his independence, perspective, literary methods and contemporary context. A rather different, less sceptical, picture has begun to emerge.[44]

All we know of Jordanes is what he tells us himself (*Goth.*, 266), namely that in the resettlement of the various nations who had fought

[42] Heather, "Historical Culture", 343ff.

[43] There is some uncertainty about the date of the *Romana* and *Getica* but they were most likely written for an eastern audience in 551, rather than as an 'authorised version' of Roman history for a liberated Italian audience after 554 (as argued by Goffart, *Narrators*, 98, 108), or over the period 551/2 (Heather, *Goths and Romans*, 47–48). The tone of the final chapters is one of anticipation, not reinvention.

[44] Goffart, *Narrators*, 20–111; Heather, *Goths and Romans*, 3–67.

for and against the Huns in the early 450s the Sciri, the Sadagrii and some of the Alans lead by Candac occupied Scythia Minor and Lower Moesia. He goes on to explain that his grandfather Paria was Candac's *notarius* until his death. Then Jordanes tells us that he was himself *notarius* to the son of the sister of Candac and a certain Andag, of Amal lineage (*filio Andages fili Andele de prosapia Amalorum descendente*). This man was called Gunthigis or Baza and was a senior Roman general (*magister militum*). Jordanes concludes by describing himself as unlearned and as being Gunthigis' *notarius* before his 'conversion' (*ego item quamvis agramatus Iordannis ante conversionem meam notarius fui*). The exact period when Jordanes served Gunthigis as *magister militum* cannot be determined except that it will have been in the first two decades of the sixth century.[45] Nor was Jordanes an accidental choice as his *notarius* because the families of both Gunthigis and Jordanes had long been closely connected in that Jordanes' grandfather, Paria, had served as *notarius* to Gunthigis' uncle, Candac. As noted already, Candac was the leader of a mixed group of warriors settled in the provinces of Lower Moesia and Scythia.[46] It has long been observed that there is a high level of familiarity with this region evident in Jordanes' work which is probably best explained as the region where he grew up and where he served with Gunthigis. If so, then it means that Gunthigis was more likely to have been *magister militum* of Thrace (based at Marcianople) rather than *magister militum* of Illyricum (based at Naissus). Jordanes has a small digression on Marcianople probably reflecting personal familiarity (*Goth.*, 92–3). His knowledge of events in the region from the 450s to the 520s at least is possibly based on direct experience and family tradition.

The family of Candac and Gunthigis bore some relation to the clan of Theodoric. At least Candac's brother-in-law Andag was of the same Amal line as Theodoric. His son Gunthigis, whom Jordanes served, could therefore himself boast an Amal affinity. It is likely that Jordanes grew up in the region where Candac and his Gothic clan had settled in the 450s, which means that the family of Candac and Gunthigis did not join Theodoric's expedition to Italy in the

[45] PLRE II, *Gunthigis qui et Baza* and p. 1292 (*fasti*) places him as *magister militum* of either Thrace or Illyricum in the early sixth century.

[46] PLRE II, *Candac* 1. He was possibly *dux* of 'Scythia Minor' which was a flourishing part of the Balkans in the fifth century with Tomi as its capital.

late 480s.[47] As the employee of a member of the Amal family, Jordanes was in a position to hear and learn about the traditions of the family which form such a central part of his *Getica*, especially that part which pre-dated the departure of Theodoric and his Goths to Italy. Such local knowledge may explain, for example, the claim that it was Andag's spear which killed the Visigothic king Theodoric on the Catalaunian plains in 451 (*Goth.*, 209). Jordanes' independent access to Amal tradition, and how this may be reflected in the *Getica*, has not always been fully appreciated. Cassiodorus need not have been Jordanes' only source of information on Amal history and tradition.

So too, Jordanes was well placed to provide an informed account of the region. In dedicating the *Getica* to Castalius he invites the recipient, since he is *vicinus genti* (*Goth.*, 3), to add or correct any information from his own direct knowledge. Although cryptic, the phrase *vicinus genti* may indicate that Castalius was living still in those Thracian districts near the traditional settlements of the Goths. Assuming Jordanes grew up in the area of Scythia and Moesia he will have learned both Latin, to function within the army, and Greek, for the civic life of the region. As a *notarius* to the *magister militum per Thraciam* he perhaps also needed to be familiar with the Gothic of so many of the soldiery in the Illyrian army. In fact, Jordanes may well have been of Gothic extraction himself (*Goth.*, 316). As *notarius*, Jordanes will have been involved in providing the personal and bureaucratic support for the general, including keeping the correspondence and records up to date.

Jordanes tells us that following service with Gunthigis he underwent a *conversio* of some kind. Many different understandings of what Jordanes meant by *conversio* have been advanced. It is impossible to be certain but it is most likely that he was indicating his move to some sort of religious life. It is not necessary to assume he was a monk. It was presumably after Gunthigis relinquished his position as *magister militum*, that is sometime in the reign of Anastasius, that Jordanes moved to Constantinople although he could have come there much later. Apart from his own experience, Jordanes would have been exposed to the historical memories and culture, the telling and retelling of events, of the Balkan communities in the imperial capital where his historical perspectives and interpretations were

[47] Heather, *Goths and Romans*, 302.

developed and reinforced.[48] Since Jordanes' father was in his prime during the battle against Attila in 451, the *Romana* and *Getica* were the works of a mature, presumably respected, man in the fullness of years. That is, his experience as a *notarius* who was then without the benefit of a polished education (*agrammatus*) was now remote.

Jordanes' historical oeuvre comprises two works, separately titled *de summa temporum vel origine actibusque gentis Romanorum* (*Romana* for short) and *de origine actibusque Getarum* (*Getica* for short).[49] Together they constitute an historical package and that is how Jordanes envisaged them. In the preface to the *Getica* he explains that he was already working on the *Romana* (*de adbreviatione chronicorum: Goth.*, 1) when requested by Castalius to produce the *Getica* on the basis of an abridgment of Cassiodorus' *Gothic History*. Having completed the *Getica* Jordanes turned to the *Romana* and finished it off too. The *Romana* is addressed to a certain Vigilius and notes that it is being sent along with a copy of the *Getica* produced for their 'common friend' Castalius. There is no reason to think that Jordanes, Vigilius and Castalius were not the usual and authentic names belonging to these friends.[50] They were all well-known to each other, and will have shared a degree of outlook and culture. Moreover, the preface to the *Romana* elucidates Jordanes' understanding of what meaning can be made of the past. Vigilius had asked about the *praesentis mundi erumnas . . . aut quando coepit vel quid ad nos perpessus est . . . quomodo Romana respublica coepit et tenuit totumque pene mundum subegit et hactenus vel imaginariae teneat* (*Rom.*, 2). In offering Vigilius both works Jordanes sees their value for him in illustrating the misfortunes of all nations, including Romans and Goths, which should only refocus the mind on God and help detach one from earthly concerns (*Rom.*, 5). He concludes by reminding Vigilius to remain faithful and close to God and to pray for him, just as he had concluded the preface of the *Getica* with a similar prayerful request from Castalius (*Goth.*, 3).

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[48] Amory, *People and Identity*, 291–307.

[49] Edited by Mommsen in MGH.AA V (1882). For a more recent edition of the *Getica*, and annotated translations, see O. Devillers , *Jordanès. Histoire des Goths* (Paris, 1995) and F. Giunta/A. Grillone (eds.), *Jordanes. De origine actibusque Getarum* (Rome, 1991).

[50] Contra Goffart, *Narrators*, 104–106.

Romana

Jordanes begins his *Romana* by explaining that in responding to inquiries of his *amicus fidelissimus*, Vigilius, he has fashioned a sort of little history (*storiuncula*) from a range of written accounts. This abbreviated history is intended to appeal to the *mediocres* rather than those looking for an elaborately written production (*Rom.*, 6–7). It is a promise he later reinforces (*Rom.*, 86, 114) and fulfils throughout the *Romana* culminating in his summary conclusion (*Rom.*, 388). Beginning with a listing of the genealogy from Adam (derived from *Genesis*) Jordanes moves quickly to the chronicle of Eusebius which began with Abraham then follows the reigns of the Assyrian kings, the kings of the Medes and the Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt. This brings him to Augustus and the Roman Empire (*Rom.*, 85). Throughout the sequence of rulers and reign lengths Jordanes shows himself in command of his material. He moves back and forth within the text (*Rom.*, 10 *supra scripto familiarum serie currentes*; 11 and 39 *ut superius diximus*; 51 *ut ita dicam*; 52 *diximus*; 52 *ut coepi*) and locates the relevant Roman material at different points. There is Aeneas and his successors (*Rom.*, 38–9), Amulius and Faustulus (*Rom.*, 52), Romulus and the founding of Rome (*Rom.*, 53) where he marks the age of the world at 4650 years and promises to skate over the rest of the external chronology and return to subsequent Roman history (*ad eum ordinem redeam*).

When he reaches Augustus Jordanes pauses to note once more that he will now retrace his steps (*Rom.*, 86). At this point, he is more expansive in reminding Vigilius that he had requested information on the order and exploits of Roman history, and that he promised to respond briefly. However, it is now necessary to refrain from elaborating on Augustus and to return once more to the beginning of Roman history in order to take up the story contained in the sequence of Romulus' regal successors, followed by the consuls. This will now be pure Roman history. These early chapters of the *Romana* do not form a separate work or detachable section. They integrate both Roman and world history in a systematic and controlled fashion, on the model of Orosius and possibly of Jordanes' contemporary Hesychius of Miletus whose *historia chronike* covered the period from the Trojan war to the time of Justinian.[51] It is therefore

[51] References in PLRE II, *Hesychius 'Illustrius'* 14.

misleading to label Jordanes' histories as a 'three-part compilation'.[52] The *Romana* is a single coherent work.

For the period from Augustus (*Rom.*, 250ff.), Jordanes continues by more or less copying the earlier histories of Florus, then the chronicle of Jerome and the fourth century historians Festus and Eutropius. For the period after Jerome to the mid-sixth century (*Rom.*, 315–388) he makes most use of Marcellinus (to 534) and other unidentifiable documents. The task of abbreviation required him to condense and integrate his material carefully, as we can see in his handling of Eutropius.[53] In deciding on this format Jordanes studiously avoided a strictly annalistic account which he saw would be tedious to his readers (*Rom.*, 114). In covering the period of his own lifetime (*Rom.*, 341–88), the reigns of Zeno, Anastasius, Justin and Justinian, Jordanes is more expansive and partial. In particular, he sums up his story as being that of the expansion of Roman territory and its subsequent loss through 'ignorant rulers' (*Rom.*, 388).

Among the sources cited by Jordanes in the *Getica*, but not the *Romana*, is the lost *Roman History* of Symmachus which provided information on the emperor Maximinus (*Goth.*, 83). It has been argued that Symmachus was also used in the *Romana*, in fact that the whole of the *Romana* is nothing more than a condensed version of Symmachus, and can therefore be safely exploited as a reflection of Symmachus' thought-world and perspective. Moreover, it has been proposed that the touchstone of the *Romana* is its reflection of the Anician family's exclusive historical perspective and political ideology.[54] Much has been made of this contention and much could be said about it. Put simply, however, there is no sustainable case for regarding any part of the *Romana* as directly copied from the lost *Roman History* of Symmachus, or as reflecting a uniquely Anician family perspective.

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[52] Goffart, *Narrators*, 21, 47ff.—under the section heading "Jordanes and his three histories".

[53] S. Ratti, "Les *Romana* de Jordanès et le *Bréviaire* d'Eutrope", *Antiquité Classique* 65 (1996), 175–187.

[54] W. Ensslin, *Des Symmachus Historia Romana als Quelle für Jordanes* (Munich, 1948) followed most notably by M. Wes, *Das Ende des Kaisertums im Westen des römischen Reiches* (The Hague, 1967) and more recently (and more subtly) by G. Zecchini, *Ricerche di storiografia latina tardoantica* (Rome, 1993), 65–90, with critiques in B. Croke, "A.D. 476 The Manufacture of a Turning Point", *Chiron* 13 (1983), 81–119 (rp. in: Croke, *Christian Chronicles*) and M. Gusso, "Contributi allo studio della composizione e delle fonti del Chronicon di Marcellinus Comes", *Studia et Documenta Historiae et Iuris* 61 (1995), 557–622.

Nor should the history of Symmachus be regarded as necessarily implying senatorial alienation to the regime of Theodoric.[55] The *Romana* is manifestly what its author says it is—a synoptic picture of Roman history drawing out a clear moral lesson. Taking Jordanes at his word, it can be seen that there is unity and consistency of structure, tone and format throughout the work.

Getica

As we have already seen, when discussing Cassiodorus, the circumstances surrounding the request of Castalius and the circumstances of the composition of the *Getica* have always been intensely debated. Almost every aspect has been controversial: Jordanes' relationship to Cassiodorus; his ethnicity, identity and purpose; his relationship to the Goths themselves; the date and contemporary context of the work; his use of oral traditions. The emerging consensus is that Jordanes is best taken at his word. This means that the *Getica* is a conscientious attempt to provide an account of the origins of the Goths and their relations to the Roman Empire to the present day. As noted previously, the shape of the *Getica* has been very influential. Opening with a geographical description which locates the origin of the Goths in Scandza, Jordanes moves to outline the movements of the Goths through Gothiscandza and Scythia thence to Moesia, Thrace and Dacia, and Scythia again, then under pressure from the Huns in the fourth century splitting into Visigoths and Ostrogoths.

From his standpoint in 551, Jordanes was telling the story of a nation which had had its day politically, having finally succumbed to the forces of Justinian. He was strongly anchored in the view from Constantinople, 'our city' (*Goth.*, 38) and the 'royal city' (*Goth.*, 107). For Jordanes, Justinian had since 540 been the 'victor' over the Goths and would soon be their outright conqueror (*Goth.*, 315). He was writing at the time when the emperor was committing his army to an all-out assault on the Goths. The *Getica* culminates in the death of Germanus and the posthumous birth of his son. Against this background Jordanes expresses his anxiety that the Empire has been diminished through the negligence and cowardice of emperors

[55] Heather, "Historical Culture", 333–335.

and generals (*Goth.*, 37, 101, 104, 119, 172). Strong military action is required to counteract this corrosive state of affairs. This plain message makes it difficult to construe the *Getica* more elaborately and subtly, as a self-consciously ironic propaganda plot with a fairytale ending uniting Goths and Romans.[56]

The *Getica* is a more narrowly focussed work than the *Romana* and therefore required more specialised reading. It is possible that many of the works cited and utilised by Jordanes were derived indirectly from Cassiodorus. However, Jordanes at least had the capacity to directly access all or most of what he cites, and that should not be discounted. He knew Greek and Latin so there is no reason why he did not use the sources he claims to have used (*Goth.*, 3, 10). The Greek and Latin sources of information range from Rufinus' translation of Origen in the preface to Tacitus and Orosius,[57] and they were carefully handled.[58] As with the *Romana*, Jordanes demonstrates in the *Getica* a strong sense of authorial control and engagement with his audience. For instance, at the outset he exhorts Castalius to be positive about the book (*Goth.*, 3), then he anticipates contrary views on the origin of the Goths (*Goth.*, 38) and the ethnicity of Telefus' name (*Goth.*, 58), as well as an accusation of partisanship towards the Goths (*Goth.*, 316). In all these cases Jordanes exposes the intended audience of his work.

While Jordanes mainly used written accounts which, like Cassiodorus, he says he preferred (*Goth.*, 38), he appears to have also taken advantage of accessible oral traditions. This is a contested and unresolved question. On the one hand, it is proposed that there is a strong element of oral traditions and information to be found in the *Getica* and that this is attributable to either Cassiodorus or Jordanes.[59] On the other hand, it is argued that the references to oral sources are illusory in that the particular information is found in written sources.[60] Given Jordanes' access to Amal family traditions, his Balkan environment, and his familiarity with the Gothic community at Constan-

[56] As argued by Goffart, *Narrators*, 73–79 but effectively challenged by Heather, *Goths and Romans*, 40–46 and Amory, *People and Identity*, 303.

[57] Zecchini, *Ricerche*, 194–209.

[58] O. Devillers, "Le conflit entre Romains et Wisigoths en 436–439 d'après les *Getica* de Jordanès. Fortune et infortune de l'abréviateur", *Revue de Philologie* 69 (1995), 111–126.

[59] Heather, *Goths and Romans*, 63–67; "Historical Culture", 317–320.

[60] Amory, *People and Identity*, 295–298; Goffart, *Narrators*, 26–29.

tinople, it remains possible that he did have some familiarity with oral traditions which he could use in the *Getica*. In other words, we may take literally his noting of historical sagas told communally (*in priscis eorum carminibus pene storicu ritu in commune recolitur: Goth.*, 28), the accompanied recital of ancestral exploits (*cantu maiorum facta modulationibus citharisque canebant: Goth.*, 43), his reference to contemporary songs (*adhuc odie suis cantionibus reminiscent: Goth.*, 72), and what is said as well as written down (*quae de ipsis scribuntur aut referuntur: Goth.*, 316). Jordanes' evident resort to oral sources of information exposes both the fact that the oral shaped the written, and the difficulty of disinterring the oral tradition from the written text.[61]

In the final analysis, Jordanes was a subject and supporter of Justinian and that is how his *Getica* and *Romana* are best explained. They underscore the instability and insecurity of the mid-sixth century when the imperial territory had been gradually dismembered and was being threatened on various sides. In this climate the value of laying out such an extensive historical vista, as far as Jordanes was concerned, was that it reinforced the ephemeral nature of earthly life and fortune. History only makes sense, so Jordanes reminded his audience, in the perspective of God's time (*Rom.*, 5).

Gildas

In Jordanes' Constantinople the former imperial territory of Britain was only sketchily known, and that from earlier writers such as Livy, Tacitus and Dio (*Goth.*, 10–15). For Justinian and his court Britain was remote, disconnected and controlled by tyrants (Procop., *Vand.*, 1.2.38). There had not been a Roman army stationed there for over a century and the historian Procopius' (*Goth.*, 4.20) confusion of Britain and Britanny exemplifies the problem of accessing up to date knowledge of Britain in the imperial capital.[62] From the perspective of sixth century Britain the emperor and his capital were no less distant and foreign. There is, for example, no place for Constantinople in the *de excidio Brittonum* of Gildas which constitutes the main extant narrative account of fifth and sixth century Britain.

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[61] Richter, *op. cit.*, 157.

[62] Details in Averil Cameron, *Procopius* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1985), 213–216.

On the basis of the *de excidio Brittonum*, Gildas usually finds a place in discussions of early medieval historiography, linked with Jordanes and Gregory of Tours, although Arnaldo Momigliano no less could never make his mind up whether to classify Gildas as an historian or not.[63] The *de excidio* is a very different work from those of Jordanes and Gregory. It is not self-consciously a history or chronicle at all but a sustained invective more appropriately compared to Salvian's *de gubernatione dei*. What Gildas himself calls a 'plaintive history' (*querula historia*, *Exc.Brit.* 37.1) was designed to persuade and cajole, rather than to inform or illuminate. Traditionally, however, the *de excidio* has been treated as a history and especially as a mine of concrete historical and geographical information on fifth century Britain. Moreover, Gildas' work has frequently been construed as the key to unlocking the mystery of Rome's withdrawal from the island. This traditional approach has had two conspicuous consequences: firstly, it has meant that the main focus of scholarly attention has been on the initial narrative historical sections (*Exc.Brit.*, 2–26) to the neglect of the rest of the work; secondly, it has encouraged scholars to lament its inadequacy as a source of reliable dated factual information, and to judge the whole work accordingly. Research of the past two decades has revolutionised understanding of Gildas and the *de excidio*.[64] It is now more fully appreciated in its own rhetorical terms and the literary culture of its author has been set in perspective. Further, the *de excidio* is now being more carefully evaluated and understood as a whole. Yet Gildas remains an enigmatic writer and the *de excidio* remains a challenging and contested text.[65]

Of Gildas himself little is known. Immediately we are confronted by the date of the *de excidio*. Within the work itself there is but a

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[63] A. Momigliano, "L'età del trapasso fra storiografia antica e storiografia medievale (d.C. 320–550)", *Rivista storica italiana* 81 (1969), 302 (rp. in: A. Momigliano, *Quinto contributo allo studio degli studi classici e del mondo antico* [Rome, 1975], 69).

[64] Of central importance are M. Lapidge/D. Dumville (eds.), *Gildas: New Approaches* (Woodbridge, 1984); F. Kerlouégan, *Le De Excidio Britanniae de Gildas: les destinées de la culture latine dans l'île de Bretagne au VI^e siècle* (Paris, 1987), various studies by N. Wright in: *History and Literature in Late Antiquity and the Early Medieval West: Studies in Intertextuality* (Aldershot, 1995), N.J. Higham, *The English Conquest: Gildas and Britain in the Fifth Century* (Manchester, 1994) and M.E. Jones, *The End of Roman Britain* (Ithaca/London, 1996).

[65] The most recent edition, with translation, is by M. Winterbottom, *Gildas: the Ruin of Britain and other Works* (London, 1978). The older edition of Theodor Mommsen (MGH. AA, XIII [Berlin, 1898]) is not entirely superseded.

single chronological anchor point. Having described how the Britons fell in behind a certain Ambrosius Aurelianus and overwhelmed the Saxons (*Exc.Brit.*, 25.3), Gildas goes on to explain that the fortune of war swung back and forth thereafter until the siege of Badon Hill (*mons Badonicus*). He then notes that he was born in the year of that siege, and that one month of his forty fourth year had already elapsed by the time of writing (*Exc.Brit.*, 26.1). The problem is to determine when the forty-three year old Gildas was writing. The traditional consensus has been that the siege of Badon Hill belongs around 500 which means that Gildas was born at the turn of the sixth century and was writing in the mid-540s and that may well be correct.[66] Recently, however, exploration of certain aspects of the *de excidio* has re-opened the question of date although there is no new consensus as yet.[67]

Firstly, painstaking research on the many texts utilised by Gildas in the *de excidio* has highlighted the fact that while he used fifth century works such as John Cassian he used no texts written beyond the mid fifth century. Had he been writing later, so it is argued, it might be expected that he would have made use of writers such as Avitus or Ennodius.[68] Secondly, it has been observed that the mention of Aetius (*Agitius: Exc.Brit.*, 20.1) in the work points to an earlier date.[69] Thirdly, the key text has been re-interpreted to mean that Gildas is counting his forty-fourth year not from Badon Hill (*Exc.Brit.*, 26.1) but from the victory of Ambrosius over the Saxons (*Exc.Brit.*, 25.3).[70] It is a risky assumption to further contend that the sort of education available to Gildas, and the audience implied for the *de*

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[66] D. Dumville, "The Chronology of *De excidio* Book I" in: Lapidge and Dumville, *New Approaches*, 61–84. For a critical evaluation of the records for dating Gildas' lifetime: P. Sims-Williams, "Gildas and the Anglo-Saxons", *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 6 (1983), 3–5 (rp. in P. Sims-Williams, *Britain and Early Christian Europe* [Aldershot, 1995], 3–5).

[67] The range of views is well summarised in Jones, *op. cit.*, 44–46 to which should be added Higham, *English Conquest*, 137.

[68] N. Wright, "Gildas's Reading: A Survey", *Sacris Erudiri* 32 (1991), 158 (rp. in: Wright, *History and Literature*).

[69] N.J. Higham, "Gildas and 'Agitius': a Comment on the de Excidio XX.1", *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 40 (1993), 124–134; *English Conquest*, 123–136.

[70] I.N. Wood, "The End of Roman Britain: Continental Evidence and Parallels" in: Lapidge/Dumville, *New Approaches*, 1–25, building on earlier attempts to link the 'forty-fourth year' to Ambrose rather than Gildas' birth (cf. T.D. O'Sullivan, *The De Excidio of Gildas. Its Authenticity and Date* [Leiden, 1978], 142–143).

excidio, was not possible by the early sixth century.[71] In the final analysis, it remains hard to escape the plain implication of Gildas' language, namely that he was reckoning his lifetime from the siege of Badon Hill. Whether this siege is to be dated as early as the 440s or c. 500 or later cannot be securely determined. What matters is that Gildas was most likely living and writing around the turn of the sixth century, but possibly up to two decades earlier or later.

Where Gildas wrote the *de excidio* is just as uncertain. The most likely indication is that, since the five rulers he denounces by name (*Exc.Brit.*, 28.1, 30.1, 31.1, 32.1) were from south west Britain and Wales then he may have written somewhere in that region.[72] More precisely, he has been located in the 'deep south of central England', in the vicinity of Dorset.[73] Nor is it possible to be definitive about Gildas' position or occupation. He has frequently been thought to be a monk. Indeed, a significant place has been accorded him in the monastic history of both Britain and Britanny and this reputation may be well-founded. He does occasionally imply affiliation with a religious community (*Exc.Brit.*, 26.3–4, 65.1–2). It is now understood more clearly than before that he enjoyed the sort of education not likely to be available in a monastery, although he may have come later to the monastery. In any event, he was familiar with essential monastic texts (Jerome, John Cassian) and came to be regarded as some sort of authority on monastic questions.

Gildas enjoyed a thorough training in grammar and rhetoric which shows that such an education, of a sort designed for bureaucrats and local officials, was still possible in fifth/sixth century Britain.[74] In the *de excidio* he was able to draw on a wide variety of texts including Vergil's *Aeneid* (especially Book II on the destruction of Troy), as well as Christian writers such as Jerome, Sulpicius Severus, Rufinus and Orosius, perhaps too the Christian poets Juvencus, Prudentius and Sedulius. Gildas therefore had access to many of the same texts used by Cassiodorus and Jordanes, as well as Gregory of Tours much later, particularly Orosius and Rufinus. His emphasis on reading as a source of information is accentuated by the repeated *legebam* in the

[71] Jones, *op. cit.*, 46; Higham, *English Conquest*, 122.
[72] Sims Williams, *op. cit.*, 5–6.
[73] Higham, *English Conquest*, 90ff.
[74] M. Lapidge, "Gildas' education and the Latin Culture of Sub-Roman Britain" in: Lapidge and Dumville, *New Approaches*, 27–50.

opening chapter (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.3, 4, 8). The Latin style of Gildas, often berated previously, can now be seen to be steeped in the literary tradition with evident similarities to the rhetorical style of Sidonius Apollinaris, while it is also linked to late Latin prose prefaces and epistles. That makes sense when one considers that Gildas himself described his work as an *epistula* (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.1; 94.1), a sign that he focussed on present concerns and had a ready audience alive to his literary touches and their persuasive effect.

For Gildas, Britain is a latter day Israel (*Exc.Brit.*, 26.1); so he sees himself as a latter day prophet, more precisely a Jeremiah (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.5). As a new Jeremiah he therefore possesses an extensive knowledge of the Bible, and is able to cast the *de excidio* as a forensic speech citing scripture as his witnesses. He includes a long series of scriptural extracts designed to illustrate and reinforce his invective against the corruption of rulers (*Exc.Brit.*, 27–64) and clergy (*Exc.Brit.*, 65–110) and to provoke his audience to repent.[75] What the work is about is a denunciation of civil and church rulers, with all their transgressions itemised, and an exhortation to repentance. He sees that the Saxons have come to dominate the Britons, especially in the territories of those kings in Wales and south-west England who were under the leadership of Maglocunus of Angelsey.[76] Moreover, God has allowed the Saxon domination to occur because of the despicable behaviour of the kings and their officials. If they are to challenge and shake off the Saxon yoke they must first reform their ways and redeem divine favour and support.

Clearly, if we may take Gildas at his word, he had long been troubled by what he saw around him; what he calls "a general loss of good, a heaping up of bad" (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.1). In fact he had been wrestling with the need to speak out for over a decade, that is since his early thirties. He was emboldened to finally speak out by his reading of the scriptures, especially the prophets (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.3–6). Jeremiah was his inspiration. There he found "a mirror reflecting our own life" (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.7). Contemplating the fate of Israel, Gildas wondered what God might do "with this great black blot on our generation" (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.13), he struggled to decide to overcome his

[75] D.A. Brooks, "Gildas' 'De Excidio': its revolutionary meaning and purpose", *Studia Celtica* 18/9 (1983/4), 1–10.

[76] Higham, *English Conquest*, 191.

silence and speak out (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.14–5). Gildas sees his work as paying an overdue debt (*Exc.Brit.*, 1.16) and that before it is paid he needs to describe how Britain came to be in its present position. The early chapters of the *de excidio*, despite their constant use, are not meant to provide an historical overview. Although ostensibly disconnected from what follows, these chapters are integral to it. They promote the notion of the past as a repository of *exempla* in the traditional Roman sense, which is perhaps another indication of the imprint of Gildas' literary and rhetorical education.

For Gildas, the struggles of the fifth century have slipped from memory (*Exc.Brit.*, 26.3). To describe them he cannot use local literary records because they have all been destroyed or taken abroad, so he has to rely on non-British sources of information (*Exc.Brit.*, 4.4: *transmarina relatio*). Gildas could resort to oral traditions, both from what he learnt within the range of his own upbringing and experience, but also from what he heard preserved by those who had emigrated and their descendents (*Exc.Brit.*, 4.4). As with Cassiodorus and Jordanes, the oral traditions circulating in Gildas' day were manipulated and redefined by contemporary preoccupations and priorities. It may be that he was completely ignorant of most events in the fourth and fifth centuries and that in the *de excidio* he was merely repeating what he had heard.[77]

Gildas advises concern at those who will criticise him for fabricating and over-stating his case against the kings (*Exc.Brit.*, 37.1–3) and for burdening the targets of his criticism without offering them a route to redemption (*Exc.Brit.*, 62.1). Likewise, he anticipates the criticisms that not all the clergy are as wicked as he portrays them (*Exc.Brit.*, 69.1) so that here too he is fabricating his case (*Exc.Brit.*, 92.1), and that his piling on of scriptural references, rather than using his own words, is superfluous (*Exc.Brit.*, 94.1). Perhaps he was well known over a long period for his savage critique so that in coming to write it down he already knew how his audience might react. His audience must have been well educated itself not just in classical terms but also well versed in the Old Testament. It was a similar sort of educated Christian audience as that for whom Gregory of Tours wrote, with a similar resort to Old Testament models.

In the *de excidio* we see how Gildas' hortatory purpose influenced

[77] Sims-Williams, *op. cit.*, 16–17.

his view of the British past. Like Jordanes (Rom., 6: *storiuncula*), he was writing a compendious little book (*opusculum: Exc. Brit.*, 37.2; 62.1; 94.1). He did not set out to compile an historically detailed or accurate record. Instead, he shows how the Roman period of the British past was recalled a century after its effective demise. Gildas' work amounts to a provincial history, an account of a region without reference to the Roman Empire. As such it is one of the first to emphasise the history of Britain for Britons.[78] Britain was not so much now a province of the earthly city but more a province of the heavenly city, a new Israel with the same direct responsibility to God, the same expectations of expiation for sin and wrongdoing. It had become disconnected from Roman history, but fully connected to the history of Christian salvation which united the Roman Empire and its former territories including Gaul.

Gregory of Tours

While Gildas' work and its purpose may be construed as applying to a specific region, only remotely connected to the Roman Empire, the same is no less true for the *History* of Gregory of Tours which was focussed on the narrow horizon of the lands by now under the control of Frankish kings.[79] Justinian barely figures in Gregory's world either, with his death being noted in passing (*LH* 4.40 cf. 4.8). The emperors of Gregory's working lifetime were Justin II, Tiberius and Maurice; they too only cross Gregory's stage when they are involved in dealing with envoys from Gaul (*LH* 4.40, 5.30, 5.38, 6.2, 6.30, 9.25, 10.1–4). Gregory's local concerns were similar to Gildas' in other ways as well. Like Gildas, his *History* was very much preoccupied with the tensions and expectations of an approaching end-time. Indeed, it may be that the whole *History* was influenced by Gregory's need to deal with local apocalyptic concerns.[80] He also shared with Gildas a determined capacity to exhort his local rulers to desist from civil warfare, seeing it as unnecessary and counter-productive (*LH* 5.

[78] Jones, *op. cit.*, 123; Sims-Williams, *op. cit.*, 29.

[79] Gregory's *History* is edited by B. Krusch and W. Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis Historiarum libri X* (*MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* 1.1, 1937–51[2]).

[80] Adriaan H.B. Breukelaar, *Historiography and Episcopal Authority in sixth-century Gaul: the Histories of Gregory of Tours interpreted in their historical context* (Göttingen, 1994), *passim*.

Praef.). Reflecting the thought world of sixth-century Gaul, Gregory's history evidences too a distinct role for the devil in influencing human affairs (*LH* 3.31, 4.39, 8.34). Both Gildas and Gregory are merely translating the example of Orosius into their own spiritual environment.

Gregory's history has always been regarded as a major work, while its author has long been considered a formative figure in defining the identity of both modern France and the French historiographical tradition.[81] His history has shaped nearly all modern study of sixth century Gaul. Much of this influence has been based on labelling and promoting his work as *A History of the Franks*. Recent research has probed more deeply into Gregory's historiographical intentions and assumptions, his contemporary context, the construction of his history, and the way the text was truncated and distorted by subsequent users. As a result it is now clearly understood that what he wrote, and originally called his work, was simply *Historiae* or *libri historiarum*.[82] In other words, he did not see himself as writing the 'history of the Franks' or as being an apologist for the Frankish nation. Indeed, it has been observed that the word 'Frank' hardly appears in the history at all and that ethnicity is more or less ignored.[83] Instead, Gregory saw himself as describing the society of mid-late sixth century Gaul at a time when the old divisions of 'Roman' and 'barbarian' or 'Frank' were no longer firm and meaningful.

As the writer of *historiae* Gregory was placing himself in the same tradition as Orosius, whom he used extensively, and other predecessors such as Frigeridus whose history he quotes directly.[84] Gregory's history is contained in ten reasonably lengthy books covering the period from Adam to the time of final composition in 594. Broadly speaking Books 1–4 are based on earlier documents and cover the

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[81] M. Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours: "Zehn Bücher Geschichte", Historiographie und Gesellschaftskonzept im 6. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt, 1994), 1–5; I.N. Wood, *Gregory of Tours* (Bangor, 1994), ii, 55–56; Breukelaar, *op. cit.*, 15.

[82] W. Goffart, "From Historiae to Historia Francorum and Back Again: Aspects of the Textual history of Gregory of Tours" (rp. in: W. Goffart, *Rome's Fall and After* [London, 1989], 257–258). The complex textual transmission process of the *History* is neatly summarised by Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours*, 167ff. (with diagrams).

[83] E. James, "Gregory of Tours and the Franks" in: A.C. Murray (ed.), *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History* (Toronto, 1998), 63–4; Goffart, *Narrators*, 162, 212.

[84] P. Wynn, "Frigeridus, the British Tyrants and the Early Fifth Century Barbarian Invasions of Gaul and Spain", *Athenaeum* 86 (1998), 69–117; see also above, G. Zecchini, in Part II, Chapter 5.

period from Adam to the death of king Sigibert in 575, while Books 5–10 cover the period of Gregory's episcopacy at Tours and are predominantly based on his own experience, what he saw and heard. These two quite different sections are bound together, however, by an overarching framework of Christian chronology which is essential to the unity and purpose of the work.[85]

The *History* was composed progressively over a twenty year period and revised along the way. It was written in the course of a busy life as bishop at Tours, and as a priest at Clermont prior to that, and its author frequently appears in his own narrative as petitioner, protagonist or victim in his dealings with various royal, civic and ecclesial rulers. A work composed on and off over a twenty year period develops its own coherence and clarity as it is reconfigured and rewritten. Moreover, it is evident that political necessity, especially in the wake of his trial for slandering the Frankish queen Fredegund in 580, obliged Gregory to take care with his narrative.[86] In Books 5–10 Gregory is necessarily circumspect in recounting events during the reigns of Chilperic, Guntram and Childebert in particular. His involvement in the complex politics of Gaul, with its ever changing alliances of kings and bishops, may have meant that the history was partly designed to shield himself from political attacks.[87]

At the same time as he was writing the history Gregory was producing a series of other literary works predominantly on miracles and saints (*de Virtutibus S Juliani, de Virtutibus S Martini, de Vita Patrum, in gloriam Confessorum*). There is frequent cross-referencing in the *History* to these hagiographical works, just as there is between each of them. Throughout both the hagiographical works and the *History* there is demonstrated Gregory's special affiliation with the cult of Martin, as the patron of his own see of Tours, and as the archetypal universal saint,[88] as well as his family's attachment to the cult of Julian of Brioude. The *History* makes most sense when considered in conjunction with Gregory's other works.[89]

Born Georgius Florentius in 538/9 into one of the illustrious aristocratic families of Gaul, Gregory (having later added 'Gregorius')

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[85] Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours*, 178.
[86] Wood, *Gregory*, 14–17, 48–51 with I.N. Wood, "The secret histories of Gregory of Tours", *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 70 (1993), 253–270.
[87] Wood, *Gregory*, 51.
[88] Wood, *Gregory*, 28–29.
[89] Wood, *Gregory*, 35.

chose the path taken by other relatives of his who had enjoyed clerical and episcopal office not only at Tours but also at Clermont, Langres and Lyons. He was a priest in Clermont before becoming bishop of Tours where he stayed until his death in 594/5. His family provided both an impetus to his literary work and, especially in Book 3, material for his story.[90] In a tangible sense the *History* reflects Gregory's self-consciousness as a bishop and the weight of the episcopal tradition within his family, although he does not always make explicit his family link.[91]

The key to the history lies in the prologue (*praefatio prima*). There Gregory explains that literary culture has reached a low and lamentable ebb in Gaul (*decedente atque immo potius pereunte ab urbibus Gallicanis liberalium cultura litterarum*) so that no-one has the skill any longer to do justice to the events of the day. Eschewing any such qualification himself, he goes on to explain how he will undertake this task. While Gregory's lament has traditionally been taken as a confession of ignorance and the sure sign of a society and culture in decline, it is now clear that such an interpretation misconstrues Gregory. Instead, he simply means to imply that his language is that of common parlance (*loquentem rusticum*), rather than a rhetorical display (*philosophantem rhetorem*). Not that he is incapable of anything better, despite his protestation (*LH praef.* 1). In fact, his style is more sophisticated than has usually been conceded, and far from artless.[92]

Gregory next goes on to formulate the purpose of his history: "I have written this book to keep alive the memory of those dead and gone, and to bring them to the notice of future generations . . . so that the summary sequence of time (*pro suppotatione annorum*) may be properly understood, I have decided to begin my first book with the foundation of the world" (*LH praef.*). Taking the story forward from the foundation of the world locates contemporary society in the context of God's time, the totality of history. Gregory underlines this fundamental direction by repeated reference to the *ordo temporum* and to the need to explicate the sequence of time, especially "for the sake of those who are losing hope as they see the end of the world

[90] Wood, *Gregory*, 36–46.

[91] Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours*, 177; Wood, *Gregory*, 6ff.

[92] I. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450–751* (London, 1994), 30; Goffart, *Narrators*, 144–148; Breukelaar, *op. cit.*, 332; M. Heinzelmann, "Heresy in Books I and II of Gregory of Tours' *Historiae*", in: Murray, *op. cit.*, 71.

coming nearer and nearer" (*LH* 1.1). More particularly, he explains that he is following the models of Eusebius and Jerome, as well as Sulpicius Severus, "so that the onward march of the centuries and the succession of years down to our own times may be studied in their entirety" (*LH* 2 *praef.*). This Christian chronological framework is part of Gregory's clear moral and didactic purpose, conscious as he is that the course or sequence of events tells its own story.[93] Time has a goal, but it is measurable and limited. Hence the concern among Gregory's people who saw themselves living at the edge of time.

Gregory's *History* sets out to develop and assert an interpretation. It is therefore important to read the *History* as a whole, not just for its political content, and to recognise the importance of its religious and ecclesiastical components.[94] Although it has been cast in terms of literary formalism as a satire,[95] it is a more fundamentally spiritual and scriptural work. Its narrative tenor, similarly with Gildas, is based on the historical books of the Old Testament, so that its descriptions of kings and rulers are largely modelled on those of the prophets. Their special roles and their accountability to God make them an appropriate exemplar for the proper ordering of the society of Gregory's own time.[96] In other words, the goals of the *History* are essentially religious and moral,[97] which may have resulted in promoting Gregory's own reputation and in reinforcing the notion of episcopal authority among his audience.[98] Exactly who Gregory's intended audience was is not clear. The *History* makes most sense if it was written with the local clergy of Clermont and Tours in mind, as well as other clergy and imperial officials.[99] Gregory is anxious for his audience to appreciate his orthodoxy which he explicitly defines and reiterates (e.g. *LH* 1 *praef.*; 3 *praef.*).

The *History* has often been seen as a disjointed series of well-told and sometimes racy vignettes but without any apparent unity and continuity. This view, however, ignores the discernible internal coherence and clear structure provided by its essentially Christian

[93] Goffart, *Narrators*, 182.
[94] Wood, *Merovingian Kingdoms*, 23.
[95] Goffart, *Narrators*, 203.
[96] Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours*, 82–83, 183.
[97] Wood, *Merovingian Kingdoms*, 32; Goffart, *Narrators*, 169.
[98] Breukelaar, *op. cit.*, 125, 290.
[99] Goffart, *Narrators*, 138, 193, 229; Breukelaar, *op. cit.*, 131; Wood, *Gregory*, 56–57.

historiographical framework. Within this framework the distinction between sacred and profane, still so clear in Gregory's models such as Sulpicius and Orosius, is dissolved. Instead, the history derives its coherence from its working out of the concept of the *ecclesia Dei* in Gregory's world. It is the story of the 'communion of saints' on earth. This elaboration of a total Christian society on the way to its eschatological fulfilment brings into relief the interaction of the earthly present, and past, with the heavenly future. It also explains the social function of the *sancti* and their miracles throughout the history, and provides a model for describing the role of kings and bishops.[100] However, Gregory's historical and theological model is not sustained consistently throughout the work. It is certainly more overt and stronger in the earlier books, but less so in the politically more sensitive and complex narrative of the 570s–590s. There (Books 5–10), as already noted, Gregory appears to be more compromisingly political and less uncompromisingly moral.

At another, more literary, level the coherence of the *History* is no less evident. Gregory's authorial control emerges from the many forward and backward references in the text, as well as its digressions and conscious omissions.[101] Occasionally, for instance, Gregory signals that he is ignoring, omitting or inserting particular material (e.g. *LH* 2.4, 2.10, 3 *praef*, 5.13, 5.10, 5.23, 5.50, 7.2, 8.89, 10.8). So too, the seemingly unconnected style and structure of the work are best explained as reflecting the influence of oral traditions and oral culture with prominence given to certain key elements such as objects, dialogue and gesture.[102] This episodic style and shape of the *History* is not all that different from Gregory's various books of Miracles. Each episode or chapter forms a sort of building block for the narrative.[103]

The oral tradition which has influenced Gregory's literary technique is made explicit on various occasions throughout the history where he draws authority and probative value from what he has seen and heard.[104] For example, there is the deaf and dumb man (*LH* 6.6) and Salvius (7.2), or the reports of travellers from Jerusalem

[100] Most thoroughly worked out in Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours*, 136–157 but aspects of this approach have also been developed by Goffart, *Narrators*, 169ff., 203ff.
[101] Goffart, *Narrators*, 194–195.
[102] J.M. Pizarro, *A Rhetoric of the Scene. Dramatic Narrative in the Early Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1989), 116–122, 179–186.
[103] Heinzelmann, *Gregor von Tours*, 103.
[104] Cf. Breukelaar, *op. cit.*, 113.

(1.7) and Egypt (1.10), or the living tradition of his own society which has preserved the memory of the second-century Gallic martyrs (1.28), and how the oratory of St Stephen at Metz had escaped the wrath of the Huns (2.6–7). Documentary information was somewhat less important though he makes a point of noting the survival of the *acta Pilati* (*LH* 1.24), descriptions of those martyred by the Vandals (2.3), an account of Remigius' life (2.31), and Avitus' letters (2.34). He also cites in full various letters relevant to his handling of the dispute at Radegund's convent in Poitiers in 589 (9.39–42).

Throughout the *History*, Gregory identifies and underscores the working of Providence and divine intervention in the course of history and daily events; for instance, Guntram's illness is ascribed to his plan to exile certain bishops (*LH* 8.20). Likewise, divine support or disfavour could have a doctrinal dimension. While Orosius could link past disasters to the absence of Christianity, the division between success and failure in Gregory's world was now marked off by doctrine. Clovis' adherence to the orthodox trinitarian faith, confronted by the faithless Alaric, illustrated the situation perfectly for Gregory (*LH* 3 *praef.*). Gregory's model of historical explanation was typical of his time. In this, as in other respects, his *History*, for all its influence, is only now coming to be understood in its own terms.

Conclusion

Taking together the different works of the Anonymus, Cassiodorus, Jordanes, Gildas and Gregory, we see how a common legacy of Roman history, literary culture and destiny comes to be variously interpreted according to local preoccupations and perspectives. What each of these writers displayed in common, however, and most made explicit, was an understanding of the nature, scope, explanation and direction of the past but with reference to a wider Christian historiographical framework. This framework was mainly accessible through Jerome's translation of Eusebius' *Chronicle* and Rufinus' translation of Eusebius' *Church History*, as well as Orosius' history. Cassiodorus and Jordanes, Gildas and Gregory all knew and made use of Orosius. Like Orosius, their purpose was essentially moral and religious, rather than purely literary or representational. That was what their educated Christian audience expected, and found both valuable and meaningful in their works.

The sixth century Latin historians illustrate the process of reconstructing and redefining the past in response to the creation and recreation of new ethnic, cultural and regional identities. They also testify to a variety of style and structure within a common historiographical genre. In addition, their language and syntax, misunderstood and depreciated for generations, is no longer interpreted as an indication of a debased literary culture. Above all, these historical texts, at least those of Jordanes, Gildas and Gregory, constitute the main surviving documents which have shaped, and continue to shape, all subsequent narratives of regional and Roman history in the sixth century west. They will therefore continue to demand the most careful scrutiny and balanced judgment.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE EAST

M.R. Cataudella

Procopius, Witness and Historian

The long reign of Justinian was certainly a period of contradictions, at least between 527 and 565, even if we exclude the preceding co-reign of almost a decade, when he possessed *de facto* control of the imperial government.[1] It was a crucial moment in the transition to the Middle Ages, with its contrast between the attraction of the new epoch and the desire to recreate past conditions, in the face of circumstances which in their ethnic and geographical aspects, and within the framework of Christian thought, were by no means easy to reconcile with the circumstances of two centuries previously.[2]

So it was a moment of travail, and one that could not fail to have its influence on the culture of the time: in varying measure, obviously, in relation to the nature of its manifestations, and to the character of those who interpreted it. Historiography seems in many respects the most suitable of its maniifestations: it is essentially contemporary history, and as such is the expression of an interpreter who is also a witness, often an eye-witness, with his immediate reactions, emotions, passions, interests. One thinks immediately of Procopius

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[1] I dedicate this chapter to Umberto Albini. On the duration of Justinian's reign according to Procopius, see below, 24ff., regarding the chronology of the *Anecdota*.

[2] This is a large subject, and one that is almost always dealt with, though in different ways, by those who have considered this period (as for example in two classic works, J.B. Bury, *History of the later Roman Empire from the death of Theodosius I to the death of Justinianus II* [London 1923] 417ff.; E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, publié par J.-R. Palanque [Amsterdam 1968] II 709–23); different points of view are found, for example, in G. Downey, "Paganism and Christianity in Procopius", *Church History* 18 (1949), 89–102 and M.V. Levchenko, *Byzance des origines à 1453* (Paris 1945), 152ff. (an expression of the tendencies and concerns of Soviet historiography of the period). Also worthy of note is A. Pertusi, "L'atteggiamento spirituale della più antica storiografia bizantina" *Aevum* 30 (1956), 134–66, and especially A.-A. Cameron, "Christianity and tradition in the historiography of the late empire", *Classical Quarterly* n.s. 14 (1964), 316–28.

of Caesarea, the most notable historian of his time and perhaps of the entire Byzantine period; his chronicle was continued down to the year 558 by Agathias of Myrina, whose temperament was somewhat less lively, and until 578 by Menander the Guardsman, who was a little later but who was in some respects linked to the same outlook.[3]

Procopius was certainly affected by this period of contradictions, as we have called it, more so than anyone else, at least among the historians. There are a number of reasons for this, which include: his upbringing on the classics of historiography; his own social class (all the evidence points to its being that of the senators and landed proprietors); the many years he spent in the company of Belisarius, characterised as they were by the stormy relations between the general and the emperor, and by the frequently decisive influence of their respective wives on political decisions; and so on.[4] While it is difficult to discern a consistent line in Justianian's policies (the reconquest of territories long lost to the empire, often at the price of concessions to the barbarians in other territories), it appears no less difficult to discern a consistent attitude in Procopius' writings, especially when we consider his attitude towards Justinian.[5]

Born in Caesarea in Palestine towards the end of the fifth century, and therefore formed by a culture dominated by the celebrated school of rhetoric, Procopius launched himself on his career in Constantinople, probably as a lawyer. There he was noticed by Belisarius: their meeting affected his whole life, for his position as

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[3] See below for Agathias and Menander the Guardsman. For detailed information and a full bibliography on both of them, as well as on the other historians dealt with in this chapter, see the classic work of Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica, I Die byzantischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvölker* (Berlin 1958[2] reprinted Leiden 1983); see also J. Karayannopulos and G. Weiss, *Quellenkunde zur Geschichte von Bysanz (324–1453)* (Wiesbaden 1982).

[4] On the role played, in general, by the imperial court, see for example G. Ravegnani, *La corte di Giustiniano* (Roma 1989); but see especially R. Browning, *Justinian and Theodora* (London 1971); E.A. Fisher, "Theodora and Antonina in the Historia Arcana: History and/or Fiction?", *Arethusa* 11 (1978), 253–79 (= J. Peradotto and J.P. Sullivan, eds., *Women in the Ancient World. The Arethusa Papers*, Albany, New York 1984, 287–313); H.-G. Beck *Theodora und Prokop. Der Historiker und sein Opfer* (München 1986).

[5] These are the characteristic features of Procopius' vision of his times; there is an excellent account in B. Rubin, *Prokopios von Kaisareia* (Stuttgart 1954), then in *RE* XXXIII, 1, under *Prokopios* 21 (1957), 273–599 (especially, for these aspects, 349–54); and in Av. Cameron, *Procopius and the sixth century* (London 1984), especially pp. 225–260.

symbolus and *pàredros* to Justinian's great general allowed him to witness at first hand many of the important events of Justinian's reign. Procopius followed Belisarius on his expeditions to Persia, Africa and Italy, and was close to him between 527 and 540; he had personal experience of the great plague at Constantinople in 542. He died probably after Justinian, that is to say after 565, but in fact little is known of the last twenty or twenty-five years of his life. They were years devoted to the composition of his various writings, years filled perhaps with disillusionment and disappointment, leaving their mark on his works.

The central problem of Procopius, considered by all modern scholars who have dealt with the period, is the relationship between his three works, the *Bella*, the *Anecdota* (henceforth *Anecd.*) and the *De aedificiis* (henceforth *Aed.*): the extent of the problem was mapped out long before Nicolò Alemanni published the first edition of the *Anecd.* in 1623: the *Aed.* had in fact been published a little less than a century earlier, by Beato Renano in 1531.[6] In the *Bella* Procopius often reveals his complete disagreement with Justinian, especially after the weakening of his links with Belisarius; what we have here may not be invective, but then it is certainly not a panegyric like the *Aed.*, which essentially is no different from other more or less contemporary panegyrics such as those of Paul the Silentiary in the *Ekphrasis*, of Corippus, or of Agathias at the beginning of the *Cycle*.[7]

The contrast becomes unequivocal when we turn our attention to the introduction to the *Aed.* (1, 1, 6–17), where Justinian is praised for having saved the state, subdued the barbarians, defended religion, renewed the laws, etc., and especially for having reinforced the frontiers, reconstructed and founded cities, and ensured better living conditions for his subjects; for this he is deserving of gratitude and of being called τῆς οἰκουμένης (1, 1, 17). Even apart from a systematic

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[6] For the history of the transmission of Procopius' works *Anecd.* and *Aed.*, see the *Prolegomena* to J. Haury's edition, III, 1 (1906) and III, 2 (1913), republished with *addenda* and *corrigenda* by G. Wirth, I–IV (Leipzig 1962–64).

[7] Cf., for example, A.-A. Cameron, "The Cycle of Agathias", *JHS* 86 (1966), 6–25; B. Baldwin, "The date of the *Cycle* of Agathias", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 73 (1980), 334–40; good information on these authors is to be found in H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (München 1978), II 166–7 and *passim*; on Corippus, see the introduction by S. Antès to his edition (CUF, Paris 1981) of the *In laudem Iustini*; cf. especially Av. Cameron, *Procopius*, 243–60 (& lit.); on Paul the Silentiary see Mary Whitby, "The occasion of Paul the Silentiary's *Ekphrasis* of S. Sophia", *Classical Quarterly* 35 (1985), 215–28.

comparison (not possible here) between assertions of this kind and the opposite opinions as maintained in the *Bella*, it is sufficient to consider Procopius' utter condemnation of Justinian's entire foreign policy, of the aggressive action in the West—which is a more typical manifestation of it than any other—and of the ceding of territory on other fronts (the Danube, Persia, Illyricum, etc.), gravely prejudicial to imperial power and prestige.[8]

This is evidently the significance of the reservations expressed in the *Bella* regarding the military preparations, the strategies and the general conduct of the war, which reveal deficiencies of every kind (thus, for example, *Bella*, 5, 20, 6; 24, 1f.; 7, 35, 9; 36, 4ff.; 37, 24ff.; 8, 13, 14, etc.); and Procopius certainly condemns the African war (*Bella*, 3, 10ff.), as being dangerous and wasteful (and in violation of the treaty between Zeno and Genseric), yet desired and imposed by Justinian. Even more condemnatory are Procopius' words regarding the defences of Illyricum (*Bella*, 7, 29, 2) and of the Danube regions: these latter had been weakened by the stationing of the Eruli in Dacia, contrary to what Justinian had hoped (*Bella*, 4, 4, 30; 6, 14, 35; 3, 33, 13ff.). The same goes for the Syrian and Commagenian frontiers: a very serious dereliction, such as the concession of the title of king to the barbarian Aretas so as to make him a defender of the imperial frontiers, turned out to be a complete disaster (*Bella*, 1, 17, 37ff.).

These are only examples, but I think they are sufficient; what in the *Bella* constitutes a reason for criticism and condemnation of Justinian's policies regarding warfare and frontiers, is proclaimed to his glory in the *Aed.*; the contrast could hardly be clearer, and perhaps only the hypothesis of a consistent ironical intention in the *Aed.* could usefully attenuate this contrast, though such a hypothesis would be by no means easy to maintain. And indeed nobody could discern irony in a text whose contents are so readily verifiable, dealing as it does with public buildings constructed during the reign of Justinian and therefore ascribed to his merit, according to a well

[8] Regarding the Byzantines' attitude to barbarians, see material and bibl. in K. Lechner, *Hellenen und Barbaren in Weltbild der Byzantiner* (Diss. München 1954) 73ff.; for some aspects cf. Rubin, *RE*, 474–88; R. Benedicty, "Die Milieu-Theorie bei Prokop von Kaisareia", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 55 (1962), 1–10; Z.V. Udal'cova, "Le monde vu par les historiens byzantines du IV^{e} au VI^{e} siècle", *Byzantinoslavica* 23 (1972), 209ff.; M. Cesa, "La politica di Giustiniano verso l'occidente nel giudizio di Procopio", *Athenaeum* 69 (1981), 389–409 (& lit.).

established tradition; who could regard as ironical the praises linked directly or indirectly to this real merit, under the eyes of all?[9]

So it seems that there was a change in Procopius' attitude towards the emperor; but for what reason? Perhaps it was the need to defend himself from a charge of disloyalty for the passages he had written in the *Bella*, since at the time he held an official position in the entourage of Belisarius; or perhaps he was genuinely grateful for some promotion or favour he had received. These are pure hypotheses, capable neither of proof nor disproof, just like the one which regards the *Aed.* as having been written on Justinian's orders. However, this latter hypothesis becomes attractive for two reasons: in the first place, it receives support from an assertion made by the author himself (*Aed.*, 1, 3, 1) to the effect that beginning the work with the churches dedicated to the Mother of God corresponded to the emperor's wishes (ἀρκτέον δὲ ἀπό . . . τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ αὐτῷ βασιλεῖ ἐξεπιστάμεθα βουλομένῳ εἶναι); in the second place, it would mean that Procopius had not in fact changed his opinion or his attitude, if the 'panegyric' to the emperor had been 'commissioned' by the emperor himself.

But the problem of Procopius is not exhausted when we establish the relationship between the *Bella* and the *Aed.* regarding the judgement passed on Justinian, in other words between an attitude of severe criticism and one of panegyric; the contradictions in the historical writings of Procopius become aggravated, as we have seen, when the *Anecd.* are taken into consideration. That work constitutes a remarkably virulent attack on Justinian and Theodora, on Belisarius and his wife Antonina (cf. *Suidas*, IV, p. 211, 7–10); the contrast with the *Aed.* is extremely evident, and while the *Anecd.* do follow the general line of the *Bella* they tend to emphasise the negative qualities of the imperial family. But the *Bella* are in strident contrast with the *Anecd.* regarding Belisarius, whom Procopius in that work treats from the point of view of the faithful *assessor* he is, whereas in the *Anecd.* he vents his spleen against Belisarius as a person for whom he has no admiration, because the general lacks courage when

[9] For an account of this question see again Rubin, *RE*, 572–75 and Av. Cameron, *Procopius*, 84–112; in particular cf. G. Downey, "The composition of Procopius' *de Aedificiis*", *Trans. Proc. Amer. Philol. Assoc.* 78 (1947), 182–3; and especially M. Whitby, "Justinian's bridge over the Sangarius and the date of Procopius' *de aedificiis*", *JHS* 105 (1985), 129–48.

important decisions have to be made, because he is a puppet in the hands of his wife, and because he has let Procopius down.[10]

A natural and immediate reaction is to suspect a forgery, in other words that the *Anecd.* are not by Procopius at all, but a careful reading—for which credit is especially due to F. Dahn[11]—reveals unequivocally its Procopian authorship; so there was no way, and there is still no way, of avoiding the difficulty. It would certainly not be easy to solve this problem by seeking to 'reconcile' the three works, that is to say by stressing their similarities rather than their differences, so as to uncover a consistent attitude in the historian, who lived historical events from the inside and thus knew them well. On the other hand if—let us suppose—the invective of the *Anecd.* and the panegyric of the *Aed.*—which by definition we should expect to be less truthful—are in fact more reliable than the *Bella*, that is to say than the purely historical (and as such presumptively truthful) work, then this would be a highly significant aspect of Procopius the historian;[12] but if analogous events can be the pretext for praise in one text and for denigration in another, it is evident that Procopius the historian is dominated by the human, emotive aspect, with all that it involves, both positive and negative.[13]

In other words, one cannot reconcile the Justinian of the *Anecd.*, nothing less than a 'demon',[14] with the Justinian of the *Aed.*, deserv-

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[10] For this aspect of the *Anecd.* a perspicacious commentary, in addition to Rubin, *RE*, 533–572 and O. Veh, *Prokop Anekdota* (München 1961) 259–75, is especially in P. Maraval, *Procop de Césarée. Histoire secrète*, trans. and comm. (Paris 1990); for a direct reference to the problem see V. Grecu, "Bemerkungen zu Prokops Schriften. Das Verhältnis der Anekdota zu dem Geschichtswerk über die Kriege", *Bull. de la Section historique Acad. Roum.* 28/2 (1947), 233–40.

[11] In an essay which is still fundamental for certain aspects, *Prokopios von Käsareia* (Berlin 1865) 287ff.; but see especially the studies by Rubin, *RE*, 527–33, J. Haury, "Zu Prokops Geheimgeschichte", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 34 (1934), 10–14; "Prokop verweist auf seine *Anekdota*", *ibid.*, 35 (1935), 1–4.

[12] It is he who states (Bella, I, 4) that "intensity is proper to rhetoric, invention to poetry and truth to history". Cf., for example, G. Soyter, "Die Glaubwürdigkeit des Geschichtsschreibers Prokopios von Kaisareia", *Byzant. Zeitschrift*, 44 (1951), 541ff.; especially O. Veh, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung und Weltauffassung des Prokop von Caesarea I–III, Wiss. Beilage zum Jahresbericht 1950–51 des Gymnasiums Bayreuth*, 1951–53.

[13] For example, the policy of religious unity, condemned in the *Anecd.*, 13, 7, and praised in *Aed.*, 1, 1, 9.

[14] This expression has especially attracted the interest of commentators on the *Anecd.*: cf., for example, B. Rubin, "Der Fürst der Dämonen. Ein Beitrag zur Interpretation von Prokops Anekdota", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 44 (1951), 469–81; K. Gantar, "Kaiser Justinian als kopfloser Dämon", *ibid.*, 54 (1961), 1ff.

ing of all praise (nor with the Justinian of the *Bella*, in many respects), just as one cannot reconcile the Belisarius of the *Bella*, Procopius' hero, with the wretch of the *Anecd.*: and it is not as if the author has discovered anything new which might explain his change of attitude. So if there was a change (and it would be difficult indeed to deny that there was one), its genesis needs to be traced. A chronological outline of the composition of the three works would undoubtedly cast some light on this fundamental problem: this too is a problem, as is well known, but it is one worthy of attention in view of its importance to the overall problem of Procopius. The chronological question, obviously, constitutes a presupposition.

The composition of the *Bella* gives rise to no particular difficulties. Books I–VII were written first, that is to say the *Bellum Persicum* (I–II, from 491 to 549), the *Bellum Vandalicum* (III–IV, from 395 to 548), and the *Bellum Gothicum* (V–VII, from 475 to 551). Book VIII, containing new information on the various fronts of the war up to 553/4, was added later, around that date. It is probable that the completion of Books I–VII took place in 550/1, their detailed treatment having presumably occupied the author for some considerable time.[15]

There is however a real chronological problem regarding the two 'non-historical' works, the *Aed.* and the *Anecd.* To begin with the *Aed.*, the prevailing tendency is to date the work to 554/5 on the basis of the arguments advanced by E. Stein,[16] and especially in view of one important consideration: it is said to be impossible that the *Aed.* could have been written later than 7 May 558, when the church of Hagia Sophia collapsed, since there is no mention of this fact in the long and detailed description in Book I. This is certainly a much stronger argument than others advanced by Stein, such as that the portrayal of the Tzani as subdued (3, 6, 6, by the general Tzitta) would not have been possible after 557, when they devoted themselves to brigandage, but it is of somewhat limited importance, even though one is speaking of πολλοί (Agathias, 5, 1, 1ff.). On the other hand, what motive could Procopius have, in a text of evident panegyrical intent, for recalling an episode which signified the failure of the measure adopted by Justinian for preventing revolts?

Of similar relevance, more or less, is the other argument, that is

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[15] For exact information on this subject the reader is referred, as ever, to Rubin, *RE*, 355–57 and Av. Cameron, *Procopius*, XII–XIII and 134–51.

[16] *Histoire du B.-E.*, II 837.

to say that Procopius' idyllic depiction of the Samaritans under Justinian (5, 7, 16) would have been inadmissible after the their revolt in July 555; but as well as being of limited extent, this revolt was in fact of brief duration (Malal., fr. 48, *Exc. de insid.*, 173), so it is quite possible that three or four years later the situation might have reverted to the one described by Procopius (and the episode is hardly worth recalling, especially when one considers the author's tone and intention).

As regards the markedly panegyrical character of the *Aed.*, the absence of any reference to the collapse of Hagia Sophia has little bearing on it (it was not Justinian's fault and for that reason to be excluded from a panegyric); in fact, if the church had already collapsed, a detailed description such as Procopius' would have been impossible with no church to describe. And if on the other hand the reconstruction had already begun, this fact would certainly have been proclaimed in a panegyric, as reflecting merit on Justinian. So are the *Aed.* to be dated to before 7 May 558 (even if not necessarily before 555)?

There is a well known chronological reference to the construction of the bridge over the river Sangarius (or Sakaria), which would appear to contradict such a conclusion. In the *Aed.* (5, 3, 10–11) Procopius asserts, or at any rate seems at first sight to assert, that at the time he was writing work on the bridge had just begun. Now according to Theophanes (*Chronogr.* 232, 27–233, 3 De Boer), work began in *annus mundi* 6052, the XXXIII year of Justinian, that is to say in 559–60; since the two texts refer, apparently, to the same event, it would seem that Procopius wrote the *Aed.* no earlier than 559. This raises an obvious problem if it is true that he could not have avoided mentioning the collapse of Hagia Sophia if he was writing after 7 May 558.[17]

One solution might well be Haury's hypothesis,[18] that Book I, containing the description of Hagia Sophia, was written before the collapse, and Book V later. It is very likely that the work was composed at different times, and that it is unfinished and unrevised, and this

[17] However the definition of *annus mundi* is rather uncertain; for this question, see V. Grumel, "L'année du monde dans la Chronographie de Théophane", *Échos d'Orient* 37 (1934), 396–408.

[18] *Procopiana* (Augsburg 1891), 27–8.

would favour the hypothesis. However it is also possible that the uncertainty regarding both the *annus mundi* and the first month of the year in Theophanes is the source of the problem of dating the *Aed.* Finally, it is not impossible that the two texts mentioning the beginning of work on the bridge—Procopius and Theophanes—do not both refer to the same moment, but that the first refers to a slightly earlier stage.

And in fact, that Procopius is thinking of the planning stage rather than the actual constructional stage is suggested by his use of terms such as ἐγχειρέω and ἐνθύμημα (which semantically identify this stage) and by the correspondence, which occurs twice, between ἐγκεχείρηκεν . . . τανῦν, ἀρξάμενος . . . and τὸ κατ᾽ἀρχάς: a circumstance unlikely to be without significance, if a different meaning is to be attributed to the two terms, as seems probable. If the planning stage is taking place now, the commencement of work cannot have been earlier: the phrase "many times he seemed to devote himself to impossible undertakings" would appear to refer to the planning stage. So it is likely that the two propositions identify a single moment, prior to the commencement of work.[19]

If this is so there is much less discrepancy between the two testimonies, that is to say the planning stage may have been earlier than the collapse of Hagia Sophia, and the commencement of work on the bridge, somewhat later than the collapse, may have been in the following year. It is however certain that work on the bridge was completed in 562, as appears from the evidence of more than one writer (Paul the Silentiary, *Ekphrasis*, 928ff.; Agathias, *Anth. Pal.*, 9, 641). To suppose that the work lasted more than three or four years would seem unreasonable, and so would a dating of the composition of the *Aed.* before 558, even before 7 May of that year. In any case, assuming that one can justify the silence about the collapse of Hagia Sophia, a dating later than 559 would be difficult to maintain, given that Procopius' account halts at, and emphasises, the initial stage of work on the bridge, as appears from his use of terms (of which we have spoken above) and his account of the time taken

[19] In this case it is unnecessary to suppose that Procopius refers to an intermediate stage of construction during the course of 561, as Mich. Whitby suggests ("Justinian's bridge", 146), in view of the explicit and repeated reference to an initial stage (*ibid.*, 147–8). The juxtaposition ἐγκεχείρηκεν . . . τανῦν, ἀρξάμενος is surely significant, as stressing the chronological succession of the two actions.

to build the bridge: there would be no sense in mentioning the brevity of the period, and even the Divine assistance afforded, if the construction was already at a somewhat advanced stage. Evidently the emperor's great effort was a factor in the rapidity of the bridge's construction.[20]

How should we understand the *Aed.* if they are really to be dated to the late 550s and not to the beginning of the decade? The flourishing of encomiastic literature around those years—we have already mentioned Paul the Silentiary, Agathias, Corippus—makes us suppose that the *Aed.* were an important part of that literature, if not its model; such flourishing was not spontaneous, but part of a large programme of propaganda. It is quite likely that general political conditions around 560 were better than in earlier years (especially ten years earlier), but it is much less likely that recent developments were sufficient to completely overturn Procopius' judgement on Justinian, based on decades of observation and experience, which in general certainly remained unaltered.[21] But one cannot reach an understanding of the panegyrical *Aed.* except by means of the condemnatory *Anecd.*

The chronology of the *Anecd.* is, then, an essential presupposition, and like that of the *Aed.* it is problematical. The point of departure is the reference to thirty-two years of the reign having passed when Procopius was writing (23, 1; 24, 29 and 33; 18, 33 gives the same sense, although without an explicit reference to the length of the reign); the question is whether these thirty-two years are to be counted from 527, when Justinian succeeded his uncle Justin I and became emperor, or from 518, when Justin became emperor, though the government was already in the hands of Justinian. In the first case the *Anecd.* are to be dated from 559–60; in the second, from 549–50. Since the hypothesis of counting the years of a reign from an unofficial date seems precarious at best, the point of departure does not favour this second case. Moreover, in the *Anecd.* the two periods are clearly distinguished (18, 45); and it is significant that in *Bella*, 2, 5, 1, we

[20] On this subject cf. also G. Downey, "The composition of Procopius' *de Aedificiis*", *Trans. Amer. Philol. Assoc.*, 78 (1947), 171–83 and J.A.S. Evans, "The dates of the *Anecdota* and the *De aedificiis* of Procopius", *Classical Philology* 64 (1969), 29–30.

[21] There are helpful observations in J. Haury, "Prokop und der Kaiser Justinian" *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 37 (1937), 1–9; full material and discussion in B. Rubin, *Das Zeitalter Iustians* (Berlin 1960), 197–226.

read that the thirteenth year of Justinian's reign is coming to an end; since this passage refers to the year 540, it is evident that Procopius calculated Justinian's reign from the year he succeeded Justin.

So, of the two hypotheses I prefer the one which dates the thirty-two years of Justinian's reign from 527. The *Anecd.* would thus have been composed around 559. Considerations suggesting otherwise seem to be of little weight, such as the notion that the work is a commentary on Books I–VII of the *Bella*, and thus unlikely to have been written ten years later (as though nothing had happened in the mean while); or the observation that nothing can be surely dated later than 550.[22] A sufficient reason is the alteration in roles and personal relations affecting Procopius and Belisarius, and the consequent diminishing of the principal concerns of the earlier years; in other words, Belisarius had fallen into disgrace, Theodora was dead, and Procopius no longer took part in imperial events, or at least not from the inside. He therefore knew less about them, and was less interested in them; so if he was to write an invective, he was bound to refer to the years he knew best, even though its basic premises took form in his mind long after the events described. That many rather than few years had gone by is suggested by a statement made by the author himself, to the effect that he had long hesitated before beginning this work, despite his great desire to do so (1, 6); where could we find space for this long period of gestation, if the *Anecd.* were written as early as 550, that is to say around the time of the completion of Books I–VII of the *Bella*? It seems therefore probable that they were written in the late 550s.

Whereas it is true that nothing in the *Anecd.* can be certainly dated after 550, it is also true that there is no reference incompatible with the successive period; but it is difficult to attain certainty in this area: for example, regarding the assertion (23, 1) that Justinian, contrary to an ancient tradition, refused to release debtors to the State, not making any provision of the kind in thirty-two years of reign. But in fact such a provision was made, as appears from *Nov.* 147 (15 April 553 or 554), which suggests that the work was written earlier than that date; yet how can we be sure that the "nothing of the kind" does not refer specifically to the "many times" of the initial

[22] There is an outline of the problem and a discussion in Av. Cameron, *Procopius*, 49–66.

proposition (οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον ἀλλὰ πολλάκις), and therefore that for the author that single instance was insufficient to acquit the emperor from blame?

That the *Anecd.* were written at any rate in the second half of the decade is also suggested by a comparison between their proem and the proem to Book VIII of the *Bella.* The latter sets out the criteria followed in the preceding books, I–VII, for the subdivision of the material treated, explaining that the various events are grouped together according to region or geographical area. So Books I–VII are arranged according to exclusively geographical criteria. The later part of the work could not however be arranged in the same way, because the written history had already been made public all over the empire, and it was therefore impossible to add the events which happened subsequently. Thus, later developments of the wars were dealt with in a separate book, Book VIII, which consequently lacked the unity imposed by the geographical criteria and acquired instead a predominantly chronological structure, dictated by the need to organise the material in systematic fashion.

We can call this criterion a chronological one, because it was intended to satisfy the need for an updating consisting of additional material, referring to events after the end of Book VII, independently of the geographical area in which they took place; and this is the character of Book VIII, according to the explicit statement of the author. Now, in the proem to the *Anecd.* we find the very same words and the same concepts: there can be no doubt that one was based on the other. But which of the two was written first? The answer would seem to be quite clear, because, as regards the criteria followed in the arrangement of material (which are the specific subject of both proems), only geographical considerations are mentioned in *Bella*, 8, 1, whereas in the *Anecd.* there is mention of time as well as place.

The very presence of two criteria rather than one suggests that the author was thinking of something extra, when he was writing the *Anecd.*, in respect of the proem to Book VIII, and if so, he must have been thinking of Book VIII itself, when he mentioned an additional criterion, since Books I–VII were covered by the first criterion. This is a good reason for believing that Book VIII was written earlier than the *Anecd.*; further support is provided by the fact that the additional criterion mentioned in the *Anecd.* refers explicitly to the arrangement of events according to time (ἐπὶ καιρῶν), such as

characterised Book VIII. If this is so, the *Anecd.* are later than Book VIII; and since it could not have been written before 554, or thereabouts, the *Anecd.* are in all probability to be dated to the end of the 550s, that is to say the later of the two possible dates, as indeed other indications lead us to suppose.

So, are the *Aed.* and the *Anecd.* of more or less the same date, some ten years later than the first and much larger portion of the *Bella*?[23] It would seem so; there are some reasons for thinking so, even though a little uncertainty remains; but it means that two works of opposite tendency were expressions of a single historical moment. It is vital at this point to know which of the two was written first, but unfortunately it is very difficult, since the 'cross-overs' between the two texts are negligible: in this connection a passage in the *Aed.* (18, 38) would be decisive, if it were not irredeemably corrupted, or rather recoverable only on the basis of a chronological preconception. In this passage, concerning the flooding of Edessa, the author refers to an earlier writing of his: we learn nothing from this, if the text has to be amended to favour one or the other hypothesis.[24]

If the two works were composed only a short time apart, as seems likely, it would appear, since they are of opposing tendency, that they were deliberately conceived in opposition to each other; we can easily see how this came about if, shall we say, the *Aed.* were written to an imperial 'commission', as part of the emperor's propaganda campaign (the existence of which becomes clear from the writings of other authors around this time, as we have seen). But the imperial 'commission' may also have been dictated by the desire to ensure that Procopius withdrew the criticisms and reservations he had expressed at length in the *Bella*, regarding the emperor's conduct.

If this is so, it is evident that the *Anecd.* must have been a response, not intended for public circulation while members of the ruling party were still alive, intended to confirm the consistency of the author's position *vis à vis* the same ruling party. The *Anecd.* must have circulated mainly in dissident circles. Procopius in his writings was to some extent the spokesman of the dissidents, and continued to be so, even though he was 'constrained' to write in the opposite sense;

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[23] Different arguments tending to substantially the same conclusion are in G. Downey, *Constantinople in the age of Justinian* (Norman, Oklahoma 1960) 156–59; Evans, *op. cit.*, 29–30.

[24] Cf., for example, Haury, *Zu Prok. Geheimg.*, *op. cit.*, 10–14.

he was concerned to make it known to his friends that nothing had changed, despite appearances. Of course, this view of the *Anecd.* presupposes that the *Aed.* were written first, if only by a little.

And this is most likely, if the *Aed.* were written in the first months of 558, before the collapse of Hagia Sophia; on the other hand, the hypothesis of the priority of the *Anecd.*, linked to a later dating for the *Aed.* (from 559), encounters the well known obstacle of the silence regarding the collapse of Hagia Sophia. However even in this case we might discern the same intention in the mind of Procopius: fighting his battle against the imperial establishment, alongside his own class, by means of a work of withering invective; publicly aligning himself immediately afterwards with the official party, by means of the encomiastic *Aed.* There could be not better way of protecting himself, deflecting suspicion and facilitating the secret circulation of the *Anecd.*; perhaps this was not the noblest line of conduct, but it was undoubtedly an effective one.[25]

Procopius' invective in the *Anecd.* was not however an isolated voice; the *Royal Exhortation* of Agapetus the Deacon[26] was produced by the same climate, though with its own inspiration and point of view. It was written before the death of Theodora, unless the protection invoked for Justinian and his wife at the end of the book is a literary fiction. Propaganda is an important motive; we have already referred to the flourishing panegyrical literature, most probably promoted by the emperor; we may regard the *Topographia Christiana* of Cosmas Indicopleustes[27] in the same light, or the chronicle of Malalas;[28] Procopius is a man of the ruling party, on the one hand (or rather of a part of it, that of Belisarius), but he is disappointed by the rul-

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[25] It seems certain that the inspiration of the work is located in the condemnation of, and the invective against, the couples Justinian-Theodora and Belisarius-Antonina; this is not, in principle, to exclude the hypothesis that we may discern in the *Anecd.* various thematic nuclei (three of them are identified by K. Adshead, "The Secret History of Procopius and its genesis", *Byzantion* 63 [1993], 5–28); doubts derive mainly from the difficulty of defining the context and motivations of each nucleus.

[26] Cf. R. Romano, "Retorica e cultura a Bisanzio: due *Fürstenspiegel* a confronto", *Vichiana* 14 (1985), 299–316; P. Volpe Cacciatore, "La *Scheda regia* di Agapeto Diacono: tradizione scolastica e pensiero politico", in *Metodologie della ricerca nella Tarda Antichità*, *Atti del I conv. dell'Ass. di Studi Tardoantichi* (Napoli 1990), 563–68.

[27] For this text see W. Wolska-Conus, *La Topographie chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustes. Théologie et Science au VI^e siècle* (Paris 1962).

[28] See the remarks of R.D. Scott, "Malalas, the *Secret History* and Justinian's propaganda", *Dumbarton Oaks Pap.* 39 (1985), 99–109.

ing party, on the other. These two aspects are kept clearly distinct in the two works we have been discussing so far, but coexist, to some extent at least, in the *Bella*.[29]

Procopius was writing contemporary history, so he made ample use of proems,[30] and inserted speeches, sometimes contrasting ones, using them to clarify his own thoughts and to express his opinions: these are among the most significant features that make the *Bella* part of a well established tradition in classical historiography. In this connection his point of reference was undoubtedly Thucydides, but the influence of Herodotus is also evident (somewhat less significantly, the division into geographical area—Persian, Gothic, Vandal—recalls the regional division found in Appian). With regard to Thucydides, it is easy to see how Procopius' use *imitatio* is so extensive as to play an important part in the interpretation of his work as a historian;[31] and in effect the natural reaction, once the full extent of the *mimesis* becomes apparent, is bound to be one of perplexity. How valuable is an historian who has such frequent recourse to a classical model such as Thucydides? One may suspect that Procopius' desire to write in the Thucydidean manner got the better of his desire for a scrupulous and objective exposition of facts; if this be so, it must compromise his credibility as an historian.

However it is evident that the reader of Procopius is not in the presence of a mere rhetorical exercise, which indicates that each case must be judged on its merits: there remains the problem of understanding, apart from the cases of pure imitation, the intention of the historian when he constructs (if not 'constrains') on a classical model the narrative of a contemporary event.[32]

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[29] There is a full outline of this matter in A. Carile, "Consenso e dissenso fra propaganda e fronda nelle fonti narrative dell'età giustinianea", in G. Archi (ed.), *L'imperatore Giustiniano. Storia e mito* (Milano 1976) 37–93.

[30] The fullest information on this subject is to be found in H. Lieberich, *Studien zu den Proömien in der griechischen und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung*, I–II, (München 1976) 37–93.

[31] Cf., for example, L.R. Cresci, "Aspetti della ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ in Procopio", in *Ἀφιέρωμα εἰς G. Schirò* (Athens 1987) 232–49; the fullest collection of material is to be found in the studies by H. Braun, *Procopius Caesariensis quatenus imitatus sit Thucydidem* (Diss. Erlangen 1885) and *Die Nachhamung Herodots durch Prokop* (Progr. Nürnberg 1894).

[32] On this subject opposing positions are espoused by M. Brückner (*Zur Beurteilung des Geschichtsschreibers Prokop von Caes.*, Programm Ansbach 1896) and J. Haury (in *Progr. Des K. Wilhelms-Gymn. München*, 16896, 1–10); pertinent observations are to be found in F. Bornmann, "Motivi tucididei in Procopio", in *Atene e Roma*, 19, 1974, 138 sgg.

An especially interesting case is that of the eulogy of Belisarius (7, 1, 1ff.), which recalls in various respects the eulogy of Pericles in Thucydides (2, 65), despite one basic difference: Belisarius was still alive, and his replacement was due to the envy of Justinian on the one hand, and to his having renounced the kingdom of Italy on the other, whereas Pericles was dead, and was not to be blamed for anything. But it is only an apparent difference, probably, beside the similarities of expository construction and of lexis: the 'responsibilities' of men play a vital part in the history as it is conceived by Procopius (in contrast to Thucydides' conception of Pericles), as they are part of his anti-imperial interpretation of events, events he himself witnessed and to some extent influenced. But the same context provided indications of his later demolition of Belisarius, whose failures are imputed to his decision of fidelity to the emperor (severe condemnation of successors is a theme common to Thucydides and Procopius).[33]

The centrepiece is however the 'slap' administered by Procopius to Justinian, which would certainly not escape his cultured readers, by investing Belisarius and not the emperor with the role played in Thucydides by Pericles; this is an obvious consideration, evidently, but symptomatic of a *mimesis* which is not merely a literary device, but an integral part of Procopius' historiography; and this historiography is not the mere chilly listing of facts, as it sometimes may appear to be.[34]

Other aspects of the *Bella* are probably to be seen in the same perspective, such as the proems and the excursus already mentioned; the case which especially attracts our attention is when the two elements are integrated, and in this context geographical material assumes importance. The modern reader is bound to wonder about the role played by these introductory sections, given their *sui generis* character; it is the historical material which is of interest here, since the

[33] See the remarks of H.J. Diesner, "Eine Thukydides-parallele bei Prokop", *Rheinisches Museum* 114 (1971), 93–4.

[34] In addition to the specific studies of Procopius already cited, one might add C.D. Gordon, "Procopius and Justinian's financial policies", *Phoenix* 13 (1959), 23–30; on the tradition relating to Belisarius, a useful study is H. Schreiner, "Über die älteste Form der Belisarsage", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 21 (1912), 54–64; also of interest is R. Cantarella, "La Διήγεσις ὡραιοτάτη τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ ἐκείνου λεγομένου Βελισαρίου. Testo critico con una appendice: Sulla fortuna della leggenda di Belisario", *Studi Bizantini* 4 (1935), 153–202.

way it conceived to some extend evades the most natural explanation, that is to say as a 'link' to the period with which another historian concluded his narrative.

It is in any case symptomatic that the point of departure should be a different one in each of the three 'geographical' sections composing the *Bella*: the *B. Pers.* begins with death of Arcadius, the *B. Vand.* with the division of the empire into the two *partes*, and the *B. Goth.* more or less with the year 476; while from Procopius' point of view the role of historians such as Eunapius, Priscus and Zosimus is undeniable, it is nevertheless true that such a role has a very different connotation from the direct relationship linking Thucydides to Xenophon (or Cratippus to Theopompus), or Timaeus to Polybius, Ephorus to his son, etc., in the classical period, or Procopius himself to Agathias, and Agathias to Theophylact Simocatta or Menander the Guardsman.[35] The same in general can be said for Eustathius of Epiphania, who is not of course comparable as an author of universal history until 502–3; given that we may suppose a degree of contact regarding the taking of the city of Amidas (of which Procopius speaks at the beginning of his narrative), the importance of the episode in the general scheme is not such as to make it a point of reference for Procopius' vision of history.

So it is unlikely that historical *excursus* of such a kind, as introductions to contemporary history, should have a logic in the *Fortsetzung* sense; a classical model does not seem to be present, at least not in strict terms, even though the *pentecontaetia* model might be cited, still in the Thucydidean mode, only that the point of reference should be located in the presuppositions of the Peloponnesian war, developed ideologically and politically at the end of the *Persikà*, rather than in the interruption of Herodotus' *Histories*. However the three different events which begin the three sections of the *Bella*, and the different geographical areas dealt with, as well as the geographical background that distinguishes each of them, make one think that the principle model was that of the *logoi*, even if only of the basic conception. So the model is Herodotus in general terms (the influence

[35] On the subject of *Fortsetzung*, the relationship—certainly a problematic one—between Thucydides and his continuators is of special interest, and so too is that between Timaeus and Polybius; on this subject there are interesting passages in S. Mazzarino, *Il pensiero storico classico*, I–II, 1–2 (Bari 1966), I, 347ff., II, 1, 120ff.

of Herodotus on Procopius has been amply documented in its various forms); the model is Herodotus' as regards form, inserted into a general scheme which to some extent recalls that of Appian.[36]

But whoever looked to the *Bella* for a more or less exact reproduction of Herodotus' scheme would not find much (or perhaps would find something similar in the *excursus* on the region of the Euxine Sea [8, 1, 7ff.], too closely connected, however, to an ethnographical model which is only partly Herodotus', just as only certain elements are common to the Egyptian *excursus* and the Scythian one). And it is obvious that in the compositional perspective of the *Bella*, there can be no analogy between Herodotus' *logoi* and the *logoi* of Procopius, in the sense proposed; and that the latter are to be identified with the three sections composing the *Bella* (in this sense, large *logoi* including the smaller *logoi* in Herodotus' sense).[37]

The different nature of the *logoi* in Herodotus and in Procopius places the problem of the *Bella* on a completely different level, as is natural; there is still the problem of the unity of Herodotus' work, also in relation to the *logoi*, but it is undeniable that their inclusion responds to a functional requirement: disparity of proportion and of tone, as well as unkept promises (the case of the *Assyrioi logoi*, 1, 84) may indicate lack of revision, and are in any case explicable in terms of unity. But is there a problem of unity for the *Bella*? The fact that there are three sections (Persian, Vandal, Gothic), and the presence of proems to each of them (as well as the proem to Book VIII), with their own geographical settings, might suggest three *logoi*, as we have proposed, but are not enough to establish that each was developed autonomously.

In other words, when Procopius embarked on the *Bella*, did he intend to write the whole work (or at least Books I–VII) in the way it is in fact written? He himself speaks of the composition of the first seven books in the proem to Book VIII; there is no doubt that a subdivision on material based on geographical area could well have been part of a unified plan, even though it is natural that each sec-

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[36] See also, for an overall view, R. Scott, *op. cit.* 61–74.

[37] For an account of the *excursus*, cf. I. Kapitannfy, "Griechische Geschichtsschreibung und Ethnographie in der Spätantike", *Annales Univ. Scient. Budapest, de Eötvös nominatae, sectio classica*, 5–6 (1977–8), 129–34; discussion in M. Cesa, "Etnografia e geografia nella visione storica di Procopio di Cesarea", *Studi classici e orientali* 32 (1982), 189–215.

tion was composed autonomously. On the other hand the very fact that the ἱστορία ποικίλη of Book VIII (8, 1, 2) is presented as a necessary solution, and thus as an alteration of the criteria adopted for the earlier books, would seem to result from a unified design, as too does the 'publication' in every part of the empire.[38]

But all this might only be evidence of a unity of approach and of form, important maybe, but not essential for our understanding of Procopius the historian; what *is* essential for such an understanding is the way he sees the contemporary events in which he personally took part, if there is anything to be gathered on that subject, and, especially, if a unified point of view guides his vision of men and events. Modern historiography has always followed closely the thought of the historian from Caesarea, bearing in mind the relationship between the *Bella* and the two later works, and seeking to identify the logic and the motivation behind his judgements; it is a perspective which may be all the more productive if there exist presuppositions common to all three sections: in practical terms, a link which ideally connects the judgements on, and evaluations of, deeds and protagonists (and from the same perspective one should investigate the significance assumed by the *Aed.* and the *Anecd.*, if they were written almost ten years after Books I–VII of the *Bella*, as is quite possible).

Among the possible means of identifying a unifying link, it is worth returning at this point to the proems and historical excursus used to introduce the contemporary history in the three sections of the *Bella*, not to consider them in relation to earlier historians, but to pay some attention to the date when each section begins (λελέξεται δὲ πρῶτον [*Pers.* and *Vand.*] and ἐπειπὼν πρότερον [*Goth.*]). Now, it is evident that these historical *excursus* are linked to the crucial turn of events in 395 which led to the division of the empire into two *partes*, east and west, ruled respectively by Arcadius and Honorius; and this is the very date which begins the retrospective excursus of the Vandal section (*Bella*, 3, 1, 1).

It cannot be entirely a coincidence that the same section contains a proem with the most extensive geographical vision, including an ample historical perspective on the theatre of action of the Bella: a

[38] Aspects of the problem are dealt with in Rubin, *Das Zeitalter Justinians*, 178; Veh, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung*, 13; G. Gantar, "Bemerkungen zu Prokops Kriegsgeschichte" *Ziva Antika* 12 (1962–3), 357ff.

perspective which is proper to this proem alone, and which deals with the deepest roots of contemporary history, the oldest ones, also in relation to the other two sections: going back to Constantine. One might add that the Vandal War was the period when Procopius was participating most actively in events, in company with Belisarius (though he had been in Belisarius' company before, in the east).

There is reason for thinking that the Vandal section played a central role in the compositional scheme of the *Bella*; and in fact the Persian section begins in 408, with the death of Arcadius, and the problems relating to the succession of Theodosius, who was only a child. It was the moment of transition from the first to the second generation after the division of the empire; the solution adopted was in practice a concession, as Theodosius II came to the throne on the death of his father, but the guardian appointed for him was Yazdagird, the king of Persia, Rome's traditional enemy. Yazdagird respected the agreement (1, 2, 7–8), but his successor Varahran invaded the territory of the Romans; the solution adopted for Theodosius II created a precedent which would be characteristic feature of Justinian's policies.[39]

This might have been the reason for the choice of such a date for the introduction to the Persian section: what was Procopius' judgement on such a defence of the kingdom is easily understood in relation to Justinian's policy towards the barbarians of the east. It was certainly a negative judgement, read here between the lines; though it was referred to, as was the division of the empire, which resulted in the episode of Arcadius and Theodosius II.

We come now to the third section, the Gothic one: the beginning is signalled from 474, but in practice the real point of reference is the end of the reign of Romulus Augustulus, in other words the fall of the Roman empire in the west. Is there a connection between this date and the division of the empire about eighty years later? If there is, as there seems to be, it must be a purely ideal one: the end of the west empire is the point of arrival for a process which has its roots in the division. As an easterner, Procopius saw the west-

[39] Various aspects of this problem are dealt with in the Atti del convegno dell'Accademia dei Lincei *La Persia nel Medio Evo* (Rome 1971); and especially in K.H. Ziegler, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Rom und dem Partherreich* (Wiesbaden 1964); also of interest, though less directly, is Mich. Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and his Historian Theophylact Simocatta on Persian Warfare* (Oxford 1988).

ern episode with the detachment and sense of superiority of one who saw the future of the empire as nothing but the empire of the east with its centre in Constantinople. The disasters of the west, decadent, in the hands of barbarians but nevertheless Roman, must have wounded the sensibility (and the patriotism?) of Procopius, yet it was an inevitable process, and its point of arrival must have been felt by Procopius as a turning-point: the moment when the eastern empire gathered in the inheritance of the western empire, which in fact no longer existed.[40]

If this be so, then it is of central importance in the Procopian interpretation of imperial history; the very fact that it marks the beginning of a section such as the Gothic one might be a clue. Furthermore, his position is rather clearly stated in the context of the *translatio imperii*; it is in some respects an unconventional position, in that it anticipates concepts not yet specifically formulated, although discussed in other contexts. The Byzantine empire could only come into being by the death of the Roman one.[41]

So, the causes of the ending of the universal empire are to be sought in Theodosius' division into two *partes*; another reason was Constantine's decision to transfer the centre of empire to the east; the results were the end of one *pars* after eighty years, and the incursions of the eastern barbarians, due to the fragmentation of forces. Seen in these terms, the Procopius' vision appears consistent, as though the succession of the empire of Constantinople to the empire of Rome were a consequence of Constantine's epoch-making choice of an eastern capital, made possible by Theodosius' division into the two *partes*.[42] The corollary of this point of view probably results from the different, indeed utterly contrasting, ideas Procopius has of the

[40] For the Byzantine point of view on the western *pars* of the empire, see W.E. Kaegi Jr., *Byzantium and the decline of Rome* (Princeton 1968); for some particular aspects see A. Momigliano, "La caduta senza rumore di un impero nel 476", *Annali Scuola Normale Superiore Pisa* III, 2 (1973), 397–418, then in *Storia e storiografia antica* (Bologna 1987), 359–79; L. Cracco Ruggini, "Come Bisanzio vide la fine dell'impero d'occidente", in *La fine dell'impero romano d'occidente*, Istituto di studi romani (Roma 1978), 71ff.; J. Irmscher, "Das Ende des weströmischen Kaisertum in der byzantinischen Literatur", *Klio* 60 (1978), 397ff.

[41] For the elaboration and the basis of this concept, cf. for example F. Dölger, "Rom in der Gedankewelt der Byzantiner", in *Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt* (Ettal 1953), 70ff.

[42] On the Roman reaction to Constantinople, cf. G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale: Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1984), 70ff.

barbarians, who are faithless, cruel, lawless, etc., in the east (e.g. 1, 17, 47ff.; 18, 36ff.; 2, 5, 26; 9, 8; 19, 26ff.; 26, 2; 7, 38, 19ff.; etc.) but are moderate, tolerant, wise in government, etc., in the west.[43]

Prominent in this respect are the figures of Theoderic and Amalasuntha, and of Totila, all examples of wisdom, moderation, good government, generosity, etc. (e.g. 5, 1, 39; 2, 5; 4, 1–2; 7, 6, 4; 8, 1–9, 1; etc.); it is evident that Procopius' thought tended to the legitimisation of the barbarians of the west, who preside wisely over the western regions of the empire. On the other hand the barbarians of the east were to be combated without mercy; this is another trace of the unitary conception of the three sections, as set out in the proems and developed in the central theme of the *Bella*: Justinian and his policies (his wars being merely the concrete expression of his policies).

In this context we discern what might appear to be a contradiction: Procopius condemns the aggressive policy of Justinian in the west, his mission to 'liberate' the western regions, as the manifestation of the will to reconquer the universal empire. At the same time he condemns the emperor's eastern policy, consisting of concessions and subsidies made to the worst of the barbarians, as intolerable weakness, which only encourages aggression and blackmail (e.g. that of Chosroes in 1, 26, 1ff.), and severely wastes the public funds, despite the raising of tributes (e.g. *Anecd.*, 30, 32ff.). What, then, was the policy that Procopius advocated, since he repudiated both force and diplomacy?

But there is evidently no contradiction if his position is understood as the expression of his fundamental notion, that is to say that the western *pars* had no further role to play in the universal empire, as a result of the decisions of Theodosius and Constantine; the barbarians who governed the west did so with moderation and wisdom, and therefore a campaign of reconquest was inappropriate, or rather—one might add—it contradicted one of the laws of history. This is the reason for his condemnation of aggression, when directed against the west; it is not a condemnation of the use of force on principle, since Procopius indicates that force should indeed be employed against the eastern barbarians, in place of the expensive concessions granted by the emperor, and would certainly be possible, if the greatest part

[43] See the account and bibliography in Cesa, *St.Cl.Or.*, *op. cit.*, 189–215.

of the armed forces were not employed on a useless policy of conquest in the west.[44]

Procopius' position was therefore diametrically opposed to the policies of Justinian. It attained its most violent expression in the *Anecd.*, and was interrupted and contradicted in the *Aed.* (as we have seen). We may understand in the same terms the historian's position regarding Belisarius. He was undoubtedly Procopius' hero at the time they were in close collaboration, but even at that time their good relations were interrupted, since there is a violent attack on Belisarius in the *Anecd.* Now, it would seem certain that the break occurred during the year when, after the capture of Ravenna, the Goths themselves offered Belisarius the crown (6, 29, 18; 29, 26), and did so insistently. Belisarius did not refuse the offer, he merely said that he would do nothing of the kind against the emperor's wishes (6, 29, 19–20).[45]

The behaviour of the general, who wanted to make the Goths believe he intended to accept the crown, and the attempts by certain jealous officials to make Justinian believe so too (6, 30, 1), led to a cooling in the relations between Belisarius and the emperor; at this point, Procopius' praise of Belisarius' behaviour, and of his abilities even compared with those of the other generals (7, 1, 1ff.), seems especially intended to neutralise the slanders which had poisoned Justinian's mind against Belisarius, and thus—if the context allows us to suppose so—his eventual willingness to accept the Goths' proposal.[46] But evidently, when the moment came, nothing would convince the emperor, and Belisarius had not the courage to break his word.

This was not at all what Procopius wanted. An independent western kingdom ruled by Belisarius would have been perfectly in accordance with his idea of the eastern empire as the successor to the Roman empire. Disappointed in this respect, he came to believe that his years in Belisarius' service had been guided by this one objective, both before and after 540, with diminishing enthusiasm as his secret desire seemed less and less likely to be realised. His disappointment exploded into rage in the *Anecd.*, as we have seen.

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[44] Cf. Cesa, *Athen., op. cit.*, 389ff., [lit.].

[45] On the attitude of Procopius, see Rubin, *RE*, 349–54; cf. the point of view of Av. Cameron, *Procopius*, 159ff., 230 and 261ff. and bibliography.

[46] On this matter see Rubin, *RE*, 464–66.

The key to all this would appear to be in the proems, if we have seen the matter aright. While the centrality of the second section, linked as it is to the reading of the proems, also implies its prior composition, this cannot be categorically asserted (in such a case, naturally, opportune observations would have clarified the sequence of events according to their actual chronological order, e.g. 3, 1, 1), and perhaps it is of no importance. It is certain that this crucial role of the Vandal section from the point of view of Procopius the historian emerges from the presence of the most extensive geographical *excursus* (1, 4ff.), and from the fact that the same problem is given importance in Book VIII (6, 1ff.), the book which, as we have seen, takes up and completes the themes of the first seven books according to a unifying logic.

The fundamental theme is the division between Europe and Asia, a very lively subject in the context of the universal empire, one that had been debated in relation to the expansion of Achaemenid Persia (Herodotus felt it deeply), but especially lively in the context of Alexander's imperialism. It is significant that Procopius preserves traces of the propaganda and polemics of that time, in speaking of the regions to the east and to the west of the Tanais, saying that they belong to Europe: we might think of Polycleitus of Larissa, and of the polemics mentioned by Strabo.[47]

So the unity of the *Bella* establishes the consistency of Procopius' thought; the premises outlined in the *Bella* certainly reach their logical conclusion in the *Anecd.*; the position of the *Aed.* is less clear, but if there really exists the relationship indicated above between the *Anecd.* and the *Aed.*, one might intuit a nexus in the global vision of one who has developed an idea of the history he has lived through, and has survived without having to make opportunistic compromises (in that case, he would have done better to follow Justinian rather than Belisarius). In the late 550s it would be difficult to find an interest dictated by personal ambition in the succession of the two works,

[47] *FGrHist*, 128 F 7, Strab., XI, 509 D. In reality there were no regions belonging to Europe east of the Tanais, as that river was the border between Europe and Asia; with the propaganda of Alexander the Tanais was shifted eastwards as far as the Caspian Sea, so that regions really belonging to Asia (and not subject to Alexander) came to be included in Europe, so that all Asia was in fact dominated by Alexander. On the Europe-Asia division in late antiquity, cf. for example J. Fischer, *Oriens-Occidens-Europa. Begriff und Gedanke "Europ" in der Spätantike und im frühen Mittelalter* (Göttingen 1951).

but perhaps Procopius was more influenced by the will to survive, on the one hand, than by the desire to save face, on the other.

Historiography, Politics, Religion. From Procopius to Agathias

All this, if true, is a reflection of the active and sometimes impassioned participation of the historian from Caesarea in the political life of his time. It is the manifestation of a temperament which found its ideal expression in the writing of contemporary history, history in which he was himself frequently a participant, compelled to take up a position in the face of opposing interests. It is surprising in one respect, but comprehensible in another, that the Church, and Christianity itself, play but a slight role in his historiographical perspective: it is surprising that we hear barely an echo, in a soul as ardent as his, of the dispute within Christendom and of the presence of the Church in political events, but then it is comprehensible that he would not wish to add a further reason for conflict to his already strained relations with the official imperial line.

These were probably matters which held little interest for Procopius,[48] attracted as he was by the politico-military reality of the empire: this must have been a dominant interest indeed, if it led to a clean break with the themes proper to, let us say, an Evagrius, whereas his attention was certainly not drawn to the historiographical experience of Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret, on one hand, or of Zosimus, on the other. What did draw his attention was classicism, as is well known: if one must speak of scepticism, one can probably speak of it in this sense, given that his public position made it necessary for him to be Christian in a Christian empire.[49]

But to call such an attitude scepticism is perhaps inaccurate, since it is in large measure the result of the awkward coexistence of an essentially classical—in other words pagan—culture and the contemporary faith (in any case long established, the expression of the

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[48] On Procopius' attitude to Christianity, cf. for example the account and discussion in Rubin, *RE*, 331–40 and Av. Cameron, *Procopius*, 113–33; G. Downey, "Paganism and Christianity in Procopius", *Church History* 19 (1949), 89–102; J.A.S. Evans, "Christianity and Paganism in Procopius of Caesarea", *Greek, Roman and Byzant. Studies* 12 (1971), 81–100.

[49] See the observations of Av. Cameron, "The 'Scepticism' of Procopius", *Historia* 15 (1966), 466–82.

official imperial position). It would seem then that what is expressed in *Anecd.* 13, 7[50] is not the condemnation of a religious faith (and the corresponding defence of another faith), but rather a pretext for condemning Justinian, in this case as a persecutor (whether of pagans or of heretics was of little importance, apparently), highly intent on Christian unity. This same subject of religious unity becomes a reason for praising Justinian in *Aed.*, 1, 1, 9.[51]

Can one speak of scepticism in these terms?[52] We seem to detect a condemnation of sectarianism in *Bella*, 5, 3, 6ff., a well known passage which is apparently a most pointed expression of scepticism; in fact, however, it is more likely that what we have here is a sense of disgust for religious controversies, resulting in a desire on Procopius' part to dissociate himself from the Christians: δόξης ἕνεκεν ἣν Χριστιανοὶ ἐν σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ἀντιλέγουσιν ἀμφιγνοοῦντες. There is no disdain in these words, probably, but Procopius certainly means that he does not identify with the Christians; on the other hand, no very great effort of the imagination is required to see how problematical such disputes must have appeared to one who, like Procopius, might have been induced to see the religious motive in history in the same terms as Herodotus, Thucydides or Polybius. If he found nothing of the kind in his models, it would be most natural for him to regard theological meditation as nothing but a waste of time: this must have been what Procopius meant when he condemned Justinian for pondering the nature of God whilst ignoring much more important problems of military strategy, and thus jeopardising the outcome of the war.[53]

Pagan historiography perhaps considerably influenced Procopius' attitude towards Christianity,[54] the role of which could obviously not be assimilated to that of the religion in Herodotus or Thucydides; and this is probably the reason for the position of Christianity in

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[50] Cf. Maraval, *ad loc.*

[51] The opposite tendency of the two works is here most evident.

[52] The problem is perceptively dealt with in Av. Cameron, "The 'Scepticism' of Procopius", *op. cit.*

[53] *Anecd.*, 18, 29.

[54] The notion of Procopius as a sceptic or free-thinker has been quite widely held (beginning with the classic study by F. Dahn, *op. cit.*, 159–62 and *passim*; but cf. also, for example, O. Veh, "Zur Geschichtsschreibung und Weltauffassung des Prokop von Caesarea", II Teil, *Wiss. Beilage zur Jahresbericht 1951/2 des Gymnasium Christian-Ernestinum Bayreuth* [1951], 28).

Procopius. It is this aspect, despite such a position, which in the first instance recalls Agathias, the historian and poet of Myrina near Pergamon, who continued Procopius' history down to 558: the use by both historians of abstract terms such as *to kreitton* and *to theion* to indicate God, is an indication of their desire to synthesise paganism with Christianity.

Completely different from Procopius in temperament and interests, Agathias lived from the mid-530s to the early 580s. He studied at Alexandria and completed his training at Constantinople, where he practised as an advocate (*scholastikos*), though without great success, since his inclination was for literature: poetry in the first place (the lost *Daphniakà* was a collection of love-poems; the *Cyclos* was an anthology of epigrams divided according to subject into seven books). He turned to history in later life, but never abandoned literature; his *Histories* ("On the reign of Justinian"?) break off in 558 after only five books, but were undoubtedly planned as a much larger work.[55]

As in the case of Procopius, it would be useless to enquire whether Agathias was a Christian or not, considering the official imperial line on religion, and the requirements of a public position such as Agathias' or Procopius'. More important would be to discover whether and to what extent he had understood and received the Christian message, and what relevance the presence in the empire of Christians and of the Church had assumed in his historical vision. Like Procopius, Agathias drew upon classical historiography, especially in its literary and rhetorical aspects; his training was essentially pagan, and he was determined to follow his chosen models in all respects affecting *mimesis* (lexis, style, dialect, chronological division by seasons, speeches, etc.).[56]

To insert into such a well established tradition the new ideas of Christian spirituality was not easy, obviously, but one does not know how aware he was of the problem; Procopius, if we are right, seems not to have been very aware of it, for his vision was more concerned with matters of military strategy, frontiers, relations with the barbarians, in fine with the unity of the empire and how it was to

[55] For the dates of his life and works, see especially Av. Cameron, *Agathias* (Oxford 1970), 1–12, 143–4 and *passim*, with bibliography.

[56] Aspects of this subject are discussed especially by G. Franke, "Quaestiones Agathianae", *Breslauer Philologische Abhandlungen* 47 (Trebnitz 1914) and by Av. Cameron, "Herodotus and Thucydides in Agathias", *Byzant. Zeitschr.* 57 (1964), 33–52 with bibliography.

be understood. He was concerned with such matters from the point of view of one who could be said to have lived them, at least in part, personally, as a participant. The same general subjects were treated by Agathias, although more from the point of view of a *scholastikos*, whose field of activity did not extend beyond the law-courts of Constantinople.

The difference in their points of view is naturally reflected more in the forms and terms which characterise their respective attitudes rather than in their subject matter: Procopius disgustedly condemns the unseemly wrangling of Christian sects; Agathias implies the vacuity, whilst asserting the futility, of disputes which regard matters beyond the reach of human reason.[57] Thus it was that the Persians (2, 10) failed in their expedition against the Greeks because it was "neither pious nor just", and Xerxes was "arrogant and insolent"; the Athenian disaster in Sicily with Nicias and Demosthenes was due to *ànoia* and *adikìa*; and Anatolius (5, 4), *àdikos es ta màlista*, perished in the earthquake at Byzantium in 542, thus suffering condign punishment.

But was the death of Anatolius really divine retribution, as the mob believed? In reality many of the just lost their lives, and many of the wicked were spared; can it really have been the wrath of God?[58] For God is *to agathòn* (e.g. 1, 1) and cannot be thought of as acting in such a way: a weighty theological problem—the origin of evil—is present here, and Agathias is evidently aware of it, as he is when he deals with the Manichaeans and the beliefs of the Persians (2, 24); he offers no solution, but considers such problems to be insoluble by man, as in the case of the death of Anatolius,[59] or regarding the cause of natural disasters such as the earthquake.[60]

Although we do not find in Agathias the harsh expressions directed by Procopius against doctrinal disputes, we do receive a profound sense of their futility;[61] on the other hand, the figure of Uranius discussing God, nature, essence, etc. (2, 29) may not be quite a parody of the behaviour of bishops assembled in synod, but how can

[57] 2, 15–16.
[58] 2, 10.
[59] 5, 4.
[60] 5, 10.
[61] Some aspects of Agathias's thinking on Christianity are examined by S. Costanza, "Orientamenti cristiani della storiografia di Agazia", *Helikon* 1–2 (1962), 90–111, as well as by Av. Cameron, *Agathias*, 89–111, with bibliography.

we be sure that the historian did not have something of the kind in mind when describing Uranius? In any case, if words like *physis, ousia, patheton* etc. are "much-abused terms", not all of the blame can be given to Uranius.

In fact, if he is induced to hazard an explanation of evil, as manifested in wars and slaughter, he does so by taking refuge in the safe harbour of the pagan tradition of Hellenistic origin. Rejecting the possibility of planetary influence or the intervention of fate,[62] he makes men responsible for their greed and injustice:[63] the influence of Diodorus' proem (1, 1, 3)[64] is apparent. Agathias, like Procopius, is certainly Christian in his own fashion; but apart from his official position and the doctrinal utterances this might involve, he does seem to be dominated by pagan cultural matrices and by the instruments of rhetoric, both as a historian and as a poet (in his epigrams pagan themes are found together with Christian ones).[65]

Christianity sometimes appears as a connotation of *Romanitas*: for example, the praise of the Franks (1, 2) is based on that fact that they possess laws and institutions equal to those of the Romans; among these is divine worship, and in fact they are Christians "of strictly orthodox faith". We sense here Agathias' political and historical perspective: a legitimisation of the empire, as in the words of the *strategòs* Martinus to the arrogant Nachoragan (3, 19) on the certainty the Romans' success deriving from the approbation of God. The presence of Christianity is probably to be understood in the same sense when the historian tells how the philosophers Damascius, Simplicius, Eulanius, Priscian, Hermias, Diogenes and Isidore (2, 30) take themselves off to Persia, dissatisfied with the doctrine prevailing in Rome, and convinced of finding better in Persia,[66] and then return disappointed to Rome (2, 31). Christianity thus appears as a feature of the Roman superiority to barbarism.

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[62] 1, 1.

[63] On the scepticism of Agathias, see for example J. Irmscher, "Über die Weltanschauung des Agathias. Methodische Vorfragen", *Studia patristica* IX (Berlin 1966), 63ff.

[64] The fullest collection of material and discussion is in H. Lieberich, *op. cit.*, 8–12.

[65] From a wide perspective the subject is dealt with by P. Waltz, "L'inspiration païenne et le sentiment chrétien dans les épigrammes funéraires du VI^{e} siècle", *L'Acropole* 6 (1931), 1ff.; for Agathias, see G. Viansino, *Agazia Scolastico: Epigrammi* (Milano 1967).

[66] 2, 30.

The part played by Christianity in Agathias' perspective sometimes has different political implications. The Alamanni, for example, are said (2, 1) to have sacked and destroyed Christian buildings, plundered sacred objects, committed savage massacres: divine punishment, sooner or later, is bound to catch up with them. Again it is a motif from pagan religiosity which forms the background to Agathias' interpretation (a motif which entered Christian thought, more or less on the basis of a *phthonos theôn*). It is the historian's observations immediately following which attract attention.

The destruction and sacking of Christian churches on the part of the Alamanni must necessarily remind the historian of the behaviour of Constantine towards pagan temples, something which caused a great stir, not only at the time, and which caused deep revulsion throughout the pagan world.[67] Agathias (1, 1; 2, 1) harshly condemns the Alamanni (whereas the Franks were as pious as the Romans), but it is not clear how for the same reason Constantine could escape blame, even implicitly, he being both the first Christian emperor and the one who shifted the focus of the empire eastwards. Of great importance is the notion formulated immediately afterwards, that is to say the justification of war in defence of one's country and one's own institutions, and the condemnation of those who, without any valid motive, invade the territory of others and wage war for no other reasons than greed and hatred, without having themselves suffered any harm.[68]

It is easy to read into these words the statement of an ideal of non-violence, an anti-imperialist stance for the time, which is nevertheless in accordance with Christian spirituality; however Agathias' thinking is also revealed by these words if we take them as an historical judgement on the Constantinian presuppositions of Justinian's empire and on the ethical content of the same emperor's eastern policy. Agathias, like Procopius, is critical of this policy, for other

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[67] In addition to the obviously approving passages in Christian authors (e.g. in the *Vita Constantini*, 3, 1, 54 and in the *Laus Constantini*, 8, 3–4) we might recall, for instance, the vigorous condemnations pronounced by the pagans, Julianus (*Or.*, 7, 228 b) and Libanius (*Or.*, 30, 6), and in a different context by the author of the *De rebus bellicis* (1–2).

[68] For some of these subjects see A. Pertusi, "L'atteggiamento spirituale sulla più antica storiografia bizantina", *Aevum* 30 (1956), 137–166 (especially 150–53); A.-A. Cameron, "Christianity and tradition in the historiography of the later Roman Empire", *Classical Quarterly* 14 (1964), 316–28 [lit.].

reasons as well, according to a line which apparently would carry to extreme consequences the choices of Constantine and their development under Theodosius; the empire is only the eastern *pars* in that case, and attempts at reconquest come to be seen as unjustified acts of war, all the more so as they are directed against peoples having a political and institutional dignity, as well as a religion, similar to those of the Romans.

This is the line taken by Procopius, but Agathias the historian has his own vision not lacking in logical consistency, quite a courageous one in some respects, despite his somewhat 'bourgeois' character and rather subdued tone; it should be remembered that he could not rely on the kind of official protection afforded to Procopius by Belisarius. Yet he is not afraid to take up his position, even a provocative one, as when he vindicates the merits and potential of the 'bourgeoisie'—a class he himself must have known well[69]—, revealing a sensitivity towards social issues not evidenced by Procopius (unsurprisingly, given his origins), who in writing of the revolutionary Mazdakite movement—of rigorously communistic inspiration—he seizes on the least significant aspect, the community of wives, unpleasing to the very masses in whose favour Kavadh had conceived his reforms (*Bella*, 1, 5).[70]

Agathias seems to have been proud of his direct use, via the translations made by his friend Sergius,[71] of documentation in the Persian language[72]: it was certainly an advance. However he suffers, not only from being the continuator of Procopius (for when the two historians are compared Agathias is inevitably the loser), but from the modest scale of his design (in so far as we can judge from an uncompleted work), and from his being dominated by his literary interests. If we are correct, however, they did not dominate him as much as has been thought.

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[69] An aspect suitably illustrated by P. Lamma, *Ricerche sulla storia e la cultura del VI secolo* (Brescia 1950), then in *Oriente e occidente nell'alto medioevo* (Padova 1968), 83–160.

[70] This motif has been highlighted by S. Mazzarino, "Si può parlare di rivoluzione sociale nel mondo antico?", in *Il passaggio dall'antichità al medio evo in Occidente* (Spoleto 1962), 410–25, then in *Il basso impero. Antico, tardoantico ed èra costantiniana* (Bari 1980) II, 431–45.

[71] This subject has been studied especially by J. Suolahti, "On the Persian sources used by the Byzantine historian Agathias", *Studia Orientalia* 13 (1947).

[72] 4. 30.

Menander the Guardsman, John of Epiphania, Theophanes of Byzantium

As the twin poles of pagan historiography between the 5th and 6th century, Procopius and Theophylact Simocatta mark the descending phase of a curve ending, with the historian of the emperor Maurice, in the triumph of mannerism, of rhetorical artifice, of scholastic practice. They have come down to us entire, the only authors of this period to do so. They probably indicate the extremes of an evolution of taste, one which it is impossible to follow on account of our lack of knowledge concerning the intermediate authors, which is modest in the case of Menander the Guardsman, and almost non-existent in the case of John and Theophanes. It was a taste which ensured that their histories came down to us, even though on account of very different and in some respects opposing characteristics.[73]

Menander, John and Theophanes more or less cover the second half of the 6th century, and together with Agathias form an ideal link between Procopius and Theophylact, who wrote the history of the death of Tiberius II at the beginning of the reign of Phocas, or in other words dealt with the reign of Maurice (582–602); he is therefore a continuator of Menander (who covered the period 558–582), and may be said also to be a continuator of Theophanes, who from 566 reached as far as 581, making ample use of John of Epiphania, apparently (Müller, FHG, IV, p. 272, even calls him an excerptor). John's history reached as far as 593, having begun with the time of Justinian, probably where Agathias broke off.

Menander explicitly states that he is the continuator of Agathias (fr. 1); in an ideal sense John of Epiphania is as well (1, 1), even though he does not look back much further than 571–2 in setting the scene for the events he is to narrate, that is to say the beginnings of the twenty-year war between Justin II and Chosroes I, which ended in the ninth year of Maurice's reign. This means that there is a thirteen-year gap between Agathias' history and that of John. So an ideal sense is what Evagrius Scholasticus (*H.E.*, 5, 24) must have been thinking of when he calls both Agathias and John (his fellow citizen) continuators of Procopius. The church historian ignores Menander, who really was the continuator of Agathias. There is

[73] For an account of the problem see Mich. Whitby, *The Historiae of Theophylactus Simocatta*, D.Phil. dissertation (Oxford 1981).

indeed no evidence that Evagrius made use of Menander; he was in any case writing in the twelfth year of Maurice's reign, when to regard Menander as the continuator of Agathias might have meant alluding to his autobiographical piece (fr. 1): this piece reflects a human episode not unknown to the emperor, possibly with some satisfaction, in the midst of commonplaces where it is not impossible to detect traces of caricature.

How should we understand his statement of the motives which led him to become an historian? It was not so much the values of history or the need to preserve facts from oblivion and to render a service to posterity—the traditional motives adduced by the historian—but a much more modest desire, that is to say, put simply, the desire to profit from the rewards offered by the emperor, who was keen to promote literature and the life of the mind, being himself an assiduous cultivator of poetry and history.[74] Menander's intention of swimming against the current is evident, if we compare his proem with the solemn announcement in the proem of Agathias, who however also declares his intention of continuing the narrative interrupted by the author's death, emphasising to some extent the contrast.[75]

We notice also a certain sense of satisfaction at the frustrations experienced by himself and his brother, both of them jurists, he discontented and his brother an utter failure; giving himself up to a dissolute life and being "saved" by the emperor are elements in the picture Menander wishes to paint of himself, as a man somewhat free of traditional categories. We have the impression that he was closely attached to the emperor Maurice; his title of *protector*, with its privileges both honorific and material, is an obvious clue, and so too is his probable use of archival material, since access to such documents was not granted to everyone. That Menander's *History* (Ἱστορία or Τὰ μετ' Ἀγαθίαν) was directly inspired by the emperor, or even commissioned by him, cannot be asserted with certainty; but there does seem to be a definite connection between the financial incentives proffered by Maurice in order to stimulate the laziest minds and Menander's decision to compose a *syngraphé*. If so, he would

[74] Fr. 1, 1 (ed. Blockley, as for all subsequent citations from Menander).
[75] Fr. 1, 20–5.

seem to have struck an auto-ironic and humorous note in including himself, by implication, among the very idle.[76]

Yet Maurice is not the protagonist of Menander's *History*, in fact he does not even figure in it as a ruler, because the *History* begins in 557–8 (the end of Agathias' *History*) and goes up to 582, if we suppose that the fall of Sirmium was the last event narrated by Menander,[77] in other words the first year of Maurice's reign. But the author's attitude to the future emperor is very clear from the few references remaining in the Constantinian *Excerpta*, and in some entries in the *Suidas*; the marked difference between Maurice and the 'generals' who preceded him is emphasised in frr. 23, 3 and 23, 4 (regarding the art of digging trenches and the treatment of subject peoples, respectively). In Maurice's behaviour Menander discerns the basis of his ascent of the throne (explicitly in the first case).[78]

The negotiations between Bingane, on the Persian side, and Maurice, commander of the Roman armies on the Persian front, are treated so as to emphasise the moral qualities of the two leaders: the former refuses to give in to blandishments and allurements, and rejects the request to hand over the fortress of Chlomaron to the enemy; the latter continues to besiege the fortress despite the rich gifts sent by the Persian (fr. 23, 7): he had not come to hoard up sacred objects, or to make war on Christ, but to make war with the help of Christ, and to free his co-religionists from the Persians who did not follow the true faith.[79] It is an encounter of noble sentiments which, in the perspective of the historian, tends to exalt the Romans in the context of a culture which clearly distinguishes the Persian barbarians from other barbarians, attributing to them a dignity almost equal to that of the Romans.

Whether or not it is true that the capture of 800 white horses by Azarephthes involved no responsibility on the part of Maurice (fr.

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[76] *Loc. cit.*

[77] Theophylact Simocatta, 1, 3, 5; that the fall of Sirmium was the last event is very probable, but not certain, and there may be some truth in the suggestion made by B. Baldwin, "Menander Protector", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 32 (1978), 101–25, especially 106, that the history went on to deal with Maurice; the classical models, after all, wrote mainly contemporary history (we are thinking in particular of Thucydides) and it was they who inspired Procopius, and probably also John of Epiphania and Theophanes of Byzantium; we cannot say anything about Agathias because he died before completing his history.

[78] Fr. 23, 3.

[79] Fr. 23, 7.

23, 11) cannot be said with certainty: the suspicion arises, however, of a principled defence of the failure of a carefully designed plan on account of lack of discipline and the arrogance of subordinates, probably when the Romans were defeated at the battle of Sirak in 580.[80] A judgement such as the one expressed at fr. 23, 2—if it is indeed by Menander, as seems likely[81]—is made of the future emperor rather than the military commander: little versed in the arts of war, he was nevertheless wise, serious and acute, uniting opposite qualities in his own person, etc.[82]

Menander's judgement on Maurice seems, then, a judgement on the emperor rather than on the commander, or man of arms; and the emperor appears to be present, even though Menander's *History* comes to and end when he ascends the throne, as a point of reference in the perspective of his predecessors Justin II (565–78) and Tiberius (578–82). The problem was always the same one, involving Justinian's desire to re-establish the unity of the empire; it was the same problem which made Procopius so critical of the emperor, who conducted a weak policy of concessions and appeasement in the east, while taking a strong line in the west. Agathias too was aware of the problem, as we have seen, and Menander was unambiguous in his attitude to Justinian's policies, despite appearances; it is undoubtedly a positive attitude, at least as far as we are able to tell from his surviving writings, regarding a policy which seems the natural outcome of Justinian's use of force against the Vandal Gelimer and the Goth Vittiger.

> Then he was young and vigorous, now he is old and feeble, but the result would have been the same, in that he would have obtained it not by war but by intelligent and sagacious conduct, if only he had not died before his time (fr. 5, 1).[83]

Even more explicit is Menander's favourable view of Justinian's policies, when he recalls the approval of the sacred *xyllogos* and emphasises the advantages of the alliance with the Avars, even if it carried a heavy price (fr. 5, 2):[84] it was a wise resolution in any case, according to Menander, in case of battle being joined with common enemies, because if the Avars

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[80] Fr. 23, 11. On the identification of this episode cf. R.C. Blockley, *The History of Menander the Guardsman* (Liverpool 1985), 283.
[81] Cf. Blockley, *op. cit.*, 282, n. 274.
[82] Fr. 32, 2.
[83] Fr. 5, 1.
[84] *Ibid.*, 2.

were victorious it was a victory of the allies, and if they were defeated the Romans would be free of an inconvenient and arrogant ally.[85]

This reading of Menander's thinking might seem to be contradicted by the allusion to Justinian's policies one detects, in connection with his successor Justin II (fr. 8), in the importance he attributes to the *rhathymia* of the Romans, to which the Avars allude somewhat provocatively; but it is not so, as it might appear, for the same behaviour praised by Menander in the fragments cited could be interpreted negatively as inertia and laxness, or positively as wisdom and prudence.[86] Justin's different approach, which was energetic and unwilling to make concessions, certainly altered Roman policy, but the author's intention seems to be not so much to emphasise Justin's reaction to the earlier policies but rather to exalt continuity, to be understood as the expression of a natural cycle, the young Justin recalling the young Justinian.[87]

Menander's interpretation follows, therefore, a consistent path, in general, and in such terms, probably, we should understand his position regarding the intransigent and in some respects menacing attitude of Justin, or of whoever acted on his behalf, towards both the Avars (fr. 8) and the Persians (fr. 9): in fact, one cannot detect an overall contrast between the policies of Justinian and those of Justin as long as the former made use of *rhathymia* in place of the policies of war. Menander does not seem to show any kind of reservation regarding the aggressive policies of Justin, not even, it seems to me, when it came to breaking the fifty-year peace with the Persians, stipulated in 561 (frr. 13, 5; 16, 1).[88] The remarks on the limits of a "bought" peace and on the characteristics of a true friendship (fr. 16) are highly significant;[89] such arguments do not, certainly, constitute a negative note; they may be merely the echo of Procopius' condemnation of Justinian's concessionary policy away from the western fronts. It was the policy of the old Justinian, but it could not

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[85] *Ibid.*

[86] For an absolutely positive usage, cf. for example Thuc., 2, 39, 4 (and Thucydides was a model, as is well known).

[87] I do not share the opinion of Blockley (*op. cit.*, 261, n. 92), who sees an explicit criticism of Justinian's policy "of buying peace".

[88] We cannot be certain that Menander did not have some reservations about the methods (e.g. ὑπερόρια εἴπων), which did not affect the rightness of the emperor's decision; his attitude towards the Avars was no different (e.g. fr. 8). Blockley thinks otherwise, *op. cit.*, 23; cf. Baldwin, *op. cit.*, 112.

[89] Fr. 16.

be that of the young Justin, according to what seems to be Menander's thinking, especially in relation to the payment of 30,000 pieces of gold agreed in 561, an onerous as well as humiliating levy: ideally, with the roles reversed, it is now Chosroes who plays the part of Justinian, given that he is now old, unwilling to wage war, and concerned only to leave a peaceful empire to his sons (fr. 16, 1).[90]

Again: Menander's positive judgement on Tiberius—who succeeded Justin II from 578, but had been Caesar since the end of 574, and therefore almost immediately at the head of the empire when Justin went mad—must be highly significant, especially when we recall that it is a judgement largely endorsed by tradition;[91] in any case we are able to discern continuity in the thinking of the historian: the recurrence and alternation of aggression and tolerance seem to belong to the biological cycle which in passing from youth to old age parallels the policies of Justinian and Chosroes (Justin's madness is a variation on this theme). Intransigence and tolerance characterise different moments in the policy of Tiberius, such as in the case of the opposition to the onerous payment of the gold *nomismata*, and the handing over of the Christian rebels of Persarmenia, on one hand, or the search for the conditions for a lasting peace, on the other, just as in the alternation between youth and old age.

If hypotheses such as the division of areas of influence are accepted,[92] if only implicitly, by the historian, they undoubtedly influence a moment of mature reflection on determining factors of political reality: a reversal, in effect, of the more radical evaluations expressed by Procopius and by Agathias, possibly the natural outcome of that alternation of aggression with tolerance. But probably the reality did not escape Menander, and peace, which the two parties often appeared to be seeking, becomes chiefly an instrument for affirming or not losing a position of dominance; thus the Romans are thinking only of war (fr. 18, 4) when they conclude a three-year peace so as to have time to make their preparations to fight the Persians (who contemptuously suppose that the Romans will not succeed even if they have more time to prepare).[93] The Persians, for their part, about

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[90] *Ibid.*, 10–15.

[91] Cf., for example, Bury, *History*, I, 79ff.

[92] Menander uses the term ἰσοτιμία (fr. 20, 2); similar terminology is used by Theophylact (3, 17, 2; V, 12, 2), cited by Bockley, *op. cit.*, 25.

[93] Fr. 18, 4.

three years later, accept that the inhabitants of Persamenia and Iberia be guaranteed freedom of movement, when Byzantium cedes the two regions to them, only because they know they are losing almost nothing, and that apart from the fugitive Christian rebels nobody will leave their lands (fr. 22, 2).[94]

So Menander's point of view seems to be a late-6th-century one, conditioned by twenty years of the reign of Maurice, whose ideal presence—as we have seen—is all the more significant in that he does not feature in the narrative. The 6th century is certainly the Age of Justinian, and not only on account of his almost forty years' reign; there seem to be two characteristic notes in the perspective of the historian who is writing in the period of Maurice: the peace with Persia, solid—as appeared—and advantageous to the empire, on the one hand, and "testament" by which the emperor established the division of the empire amongst his sons, on the other. The peace could be seem as the conclusion of a long period of alternating fortunes, but above all it was the pendant to the fifty-year peace concluded by Justinian in 561, requested now by the king of Persia, Chosroes II, constrained by the force and prestige of the rebel Bahram, conqueror of the Turks (the letter of Chosroes is in Theophylact Simocatta, 4, 11, if anything authentic survives amidst the welter of rhetoric).

The "testament"—once again it is Theophylact (8, 11, 8–10) who tells us about it—envisaged in substance a division of the empire into *partes*, an eastern *pars* ruled by the eldest son Theodosius and with its capital at Constantinople, and a western *pars* with its capital at Rome, governed by Tiberius (further fractions of the imperial dominion were to be entrusted to other sons, under the tutelage of Domentianus). A universalist vision would seem to have been the basis for the division, and in this sense the point of reference was Justinian's great decision; but it is easy to imagine that the inspiration for it (in the fifteenth year of Maurice's reign) goes along way further back, to the time of Theodosius in the late 4th century.

Menander's point of view seems an essentially positive one regarding imperial history from the last seven years of Justinian until the end of the reign of Tiberius; this is very likely, even though we read his history in extracts and therefore we may be missing significant

[94] This is the opinion of Menander (fr. 20, 2).

aspects of his thinking which would not of course have escaped Procopius and Agathias. It is however a judgement apparently founded on the peace Maurice concluded with the Persians, the positive conclusion to a long story which, without the opportunity for a lasting peace, had little to recommend it (e.g. the policies of Tiberius). It is easy to grasp the crucial role played by the peace negotiations of 561, in Menander's vision, and thus why they take up so much space in his account (fr. 6).[95] On the other hand, the same judgement is founded on the *partes* of Maurice, which are the culmination of two centuries' development beginning with Theodosius; in them we can discern a sense, again as in a cycle, of the alternation of aggression and tolerance, of youth and old age.[96]

The central point in the narrative of John of Epiphania—secretary to Gregory, the patriarch of Antioch—is the flight of Chosroes II into the arms of Maurice, and his restoration to the throne by the same emperor, in 591, followed by a peace favourable to the Romans; the extract which has come down to us (*Cod. Vat.* 1056) deals with the violation of the peace of many decades and the resulting reciprocal accusations. The bad faith of the Persians when they sign a treaty or promise anything is almost a commonplace;[97] but there is also the evident condemnation of Justinian's eastern policies, when the extension of the peace is blamed for the decline in military organisation and the fading of the warlike spirit.[98]

John seems to follow Procopius' line, more or less; it is not possible to verify whether or not this shared point of view appears at other points, but of significance is his judgement on Justin when the emperor confers the title of Caesar on Tiberius, "the best thing he did in his whole reign";[99] his judgement on Tiberius II is therefore enthusiastic: σωτήριον βουλευθέν, πλεῖστον αἴτιον ἀγαθῶν τοῖς Ῥωμαίων γέγονε πράγμασι. However, these opinions of his are shared by Evagrius (*H.E.*, 5, 1) and by Gregory of Tours (4, 40) as regards

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[95] Cf. for example Bockley, *op. cit.*, 17.

[96] For various relevant aspects concerning the emperor Maurice, see for example P. Goubert, *Byzance avant l'Islam, I, Byzance et l'Orient sous les souccesseurs de Justinien. L'empereur Maurice* (Paris 1951); and especially Mich. Whitby, *op. cit., passim.*

[97] There are specific references, for example, in chapters 2 and 4.

[98] The operation conducted by Adaarmanes is cited as a result of such an attitude, cf. ch. 4.

[99] However the policies of Tiberius—of opposite tendency, evidently—envisaged the treaty with Chosroes; cf. ch. 5.

the condemnation of Justin, and by Evagrius (*H.E.*, 5, 22) and by Paul the Deacon (3, 15) as regards the eulogy of Tiberius; this means it is impossible to arrive at the distinctive features of this thought, even in its essential aspects, just as in the case of Theophylact Simocatta, who made use of him, although we do not know how or to what extent.[100]

Not much is to be learned from the fact that in the passage by John of Epiphania there is information on some subjects also treated in the even shorter passage by Theophanes of Byzantium (Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 64); he covered in ten books a period of one decade of the Persian wars, beginning with 566–7, and probably reached further, as we have seen (even though the mention of other books, in addition to the ten, seems to refer to a text on Justinian, recorded as being by the same author).

The principal subjects are the Persian expedition against the Omeritae, tributaries of the Romans; the embassy of Zemarchus to the Turks on behalf of Justin II; the revolt of the Armenian tributaries of the Persians against Surena; the fall into disgrace of Marcian and its consequences. To restrict ourselves to a single example, the revolt of the Armenians—effectively supported by the Romans—was seen by the Persians as involving Roman responsibility for the breaking of the treaty, according to John of Epiphania's version; the same episode, according to Theophanes of Byzantium, was the decisive cause of the breaking of the treaty, although his interpretation is more obviously from the Roman point of view.

John's position on this matter would seem to be the more objective; he, moreover, does not fail to attribute responsibility to the Romans in another context, Justin's refusal to pay the Persians the annual sums agreed under the terms of the treaty, which made Rome Πέρσαις ὑπόφορον ἐς ἀεί.[101] Another example: the reason Justin removed Marcian from command, according to John, was the accusation that he had deliberately conducted the action badly, which contrasts with the picture earlier given of him as a man well supplied with qualities and with warlike and human virtues.[102] For Theophanes, the

[100] M. Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice*, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

[101] There are pertinent observations in H. Turtledove, "Justin II's Observance of Justinan's Persian Treaty of 562", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 76 (1981), 293–301.

[102] Chs. 3 and 4; the contrast, in the last analysis, is resolved in a negative view of the emperor, incapable of rightly evaluating facts, people and circumstances.

cause of Marcian's dismissal was his attempt to seize supreme power: Justin seems in both authors to be a man of somewhat hasty decisions and easily influenced, although in Theophanes no real contradiction emerges, and the accusation is graver. So it appears that Theophanes' position is pro-imperial, whereas John's is possibly more objective.[103]

If this be so—for every conclusion must be highly uncertain, in view of the paucity of available material—we discern in Theophanes the lineaments of a court historian to Justin,[104] and in John, on the other hand, a critic of Justinian along the lines of Procopius, and a critic of Justin II, if we have correctly understood his thinking in relation to Theophanes, but above all, if the best thing the emperor did was the elevation of Tiberius; for this reason perhaps even John was a court historian, but of Tiberius and Maurice (this is only a supposition, because there is no mention of them, at least not in the extract).[105]

Ancient History: Petros Patricius and the Anonymus post Dionem

The historians of whom we have been speaking were writing contemporary history, even if the requirements of narrative or lacunae to be filled may have induced them to go back in time, even a great many decades back; we recall, for example, Procopius' account of events on the eastern front in relation to contemporary history. From this line, which essentially derives from the models of classical historiography, Petros Patricius diverges completely. He was more of less a contemporary of Procopius, but he wrote ancient history; the

[103] A symptomatic aspect is that relating to religious policy, on which see for example the remarks of Av. Cameron, "The Early Religious Policies of Justin II", in Eadem, *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (London 1981), 51–67.

[104] Certainly of great interest is the information he gives us regarding the raising of silk-worms, which he learned about in Byzantium from a Persian who had been to China; the information, as presented in Photius' extract, seems to be the pretext for a very brief excursus on commercial relations with the Chinese and on the success of Justin II's policy towards the Turks (even though the consequence was, practically, the enslavement of the Ethiopians, his allies); full details in, for example, Stein, *Hist. B.E.*, 769–773 and 843–845.

[105] For the tendencies in imperial policy during this period, still useful is the treatment by E. Stein, *Studien zur Geschichte der byzantischen Reiches, vornehmlich Kaisern Justinus II und Tiberius Constantinus* (Stuttgart 1919).

difference is significant, because the rhythms of their lives and their constant involvement in politics might lead us to suppose a certain similarity of temperament. But their personalities and interests were really quite different, and expressed themselves in the different choice of subject. In any case, Petros Patricius' choice must have seemed an unfashionable one, as Johannes Lydus did not fail to emphasise.[106]

Born in Thessalonica,[107] but *Illyrikòs*[108] because Macedonia was at that time under the jurisdiction of the *praefectus praetorii* of Illyricum, at the very beginning of the century, he was given a number of prestigious appointments as ambassador (in 534 to Amalasunta, in 552 to Pope Vigilius for the question of the 'Three Chapters', in 562 to King Chosroes of Persian for the peace treaty), and in 538 he was appointed *magister officiorum*; he wrote *Histories* and a treatise on the ordering of the State (Περὶ πολιτικῆς καταστάσεως), the subject of which was essentially connected with the post of *magister officiorum*, with its history and the relative documentation. Of this last work there remains what is contained in chapters 84 and 85 of Book I of the *De caerimoniis* of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, but chapters 84–95 constitute a unified whole, so that all of them are probably covered by the phrase ἐκ τῶν τοῦ μαγίστρου Πέτρου, said explicitly only of the first two.[109]

The dating of this text is fully compatible with the details of Petros' life, because the text reflects a period in which Theodora was already dead and Justinian was still alive (390, 9; 391, 17), and is therefore to be dated between 548 and 565;[110] this dating is of decisive help as regards the problem of a possible identification of this work with a text called Περὶ πολιτικῆς of which a very short summary is provided by Photius (*Bibl. Cod.* 37), and of which there survive two extensive passages in a Vatican palimpsest (see below).[111] What seems

[106] *De mag.* 2, 26.

[107] For information on the life of Petros Patricius see A. Nagl in *RE*, XXXVIII Hb. (1938), 1296–1304, s.v. *Petros* 6.

[108] Documentation in V. Grecu, "Die Abstammung des Historikers Petros Patricius", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 40 (1940), 448.

[109] This theory was proposed by Reiske, and in general was favourably received; it was rejected however by Wäschke, *Über das von Reiske vermutete Fragment der Exzerpte Konstantins* Περὶ ἀναγορεύσεως (Dessau 1878).

[110] Cf. J.B. Bury, "The Ceremonial Book of Constantine Porphyrogennetos", *The English Historical Review* 86 (1907), 209–227 (especially 212–213).

[111] See however E. Barker, *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium. From Justin I to the last Paleologus* (Oxford 1957), 63–75.

certain is that the work used by Constantine Porphyrogennetos was predominantly an antiquarian study dealing especially with ceremonies and institutions which by that time had changed or disappeared altogether, connected with circumstances and facts that no longer existed. From the little that remains it is impossible to say what the author's intention was, apart from pure erudition; however it would seem natural to place Petros' work in an imperial context, as one intended to recreate, on the political and institutional level, the magnificence if the past; in fact nothing is more obvious, considering that he was an important public functionary with specific duties.

Angelo Mai proposed identifying this text—presumably the Περὶ πολιτικῆς καταστάσεως by Petros mentioned in the Suidas[112]—with two ample fragments (belonging to Books IV and V) of a work called Περὶ πολιτικῆς ἐπιστήμης, which he had discovered in a Vatican palimpsest and published in 1827.[113] This is why this dialogue between the patrician Menas and the referendary Thomas is worthy of consideration here; but for no other reason, given that there seems in fact to be nothing in common with Petros' work of that title (κατάστασις is after all very different from ἐπιστήμη) except for 1, 84–95 of *De caerimoniis*, of which we have spoken. The content of the dialogue between Menas and Thomas (Menodorus and Thomasios in the palimpsest) can be found, even though in few words, in the extract cited by Photius; in six books a new[114] doctrine of the State is proposed, breaking with the thinking of the ancients, or rather a political system called "dicearchic": in opposition to Plato, as the author supposes, but in reality a mixed constitution.[115]

There is some analogy (in addition to the basic similarity of the interlocutors' names) with the contents, as far as one can gather them, of the palimpsest, that is to say the problems of military organisation in Book IV, and of political science in Book V, even though

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[112] 2, 1406.

[113] *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio*, II (Roma 1827), 571–609.

[114] At least it is presented as new, though what it is about it that is novel escapes us (especially if we think of Polybius, on whom see for example Ch. Schubert, "Mischverfassung und Gleichgewichtssystem. Polybios und seine Vorläufer", in *Rom und der Griechische Osten. Festschr. f. H.H. Schmitt* [Stuttgart 1995], 225–35; and A. Lintott, "The theory of the mixed constitution in Rome", in J. Barnes and M. Griffin eds. *Philosophia togata II. Plato and Aristotle at Rome* [Oxford 1997], 70–85).

[115] There is a full treatment of this subject especially in G.J.D. Aalders, *Die Theorie der gemischten Verfassung im Altertum* (Amsterdam 1968), 72–74 and *passim*.

there is no explicit trace of the *dikaiarchikòn* or of the mixed constitution;[116] where any doubt remains—given that so little of the dialogue survives, perhaps only one tenth of it—that the lost portion dealt with subjects such as the κατάστασις of Petros (which is not utterly impossible), the question is settled by the dialogue's probable dating.[117] It is in fact very unlikely to belong to the second part of Justinian's reign, after the death of Theodora (that it does belong to Justinian's reign had already been realised by Mai), unlike Petros' text, which as we have seen dates from 548–65; and in fact clues have been found in favour of a *terminus a quo* of, shall we say, 535—when Belisarius' victory over the Vandals with 5000 horse would have rendered somewhat precarious the affirmation of the supremacy of the infantry, which is one of the dialogue's main themes—or even 532, the year of the 'Nika' revolt (the imperative of νικάω).[118]

There can in any case be no doubt regarding the *terminus ad quem*: it is sufficient to consider the name of the Persian king Peroz[119] (457–84), son of Yazdegerd II; the victory of Belisarius' cavalry in 535 is presented by Procopius as an incredible, almost miraculous event,[120] such as to subvert any rational expectations: can it be by chance that the anonymous author uses the same terms that Procopius applies to Belisarius' victory in 535—*tyche* and *logos*, in fact—when he alludes to the exceptional features of the decisive role played by the infantry (4, 48–9)? A fact such as this might well suggest reflections, such as those of Menodorus in the dialogue, on the neglect of the infantry, on the resultant weakening of the State, and on the need for reorganisation: the author seems to be saying that miracles can only happen once.

The author may have know about this, or he may not; but we may wonder what he was thinking of when he asserted, regarding

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[116] For an interpretation of the thought expressed in the anonymous dialogue in relation to the *Perì politikés* mentioned by Photius, see especially A. Fotiou, "Dicearchus and the mixed constitution in sixth-century Byzantium. New evidence from a treatise on 'political science'", *Byzantion* 5 (1981), 533–547.

[117] A. Pertusi agrees with Mai in his "I principi fondamentali della concezione del potere a Bisanzio", *Bollettino dell'Istituto storico Italiano per il Medioevo e Archivio Muratoriano* 80 (1968) 1–23.

[118] Cf. for example C.M. Mazzucchi, "Per una rilettura del palinsesto vaticano contenente il dialogo 'Sulla scienza politica' del tempo di Giustiniano" in G. Archi (ed.), *L'imperatore Giustiniano, op. cit.*, 237–247.

[119] W. Ensslin, *R.E.*, XXXVII Hb. 887–889, s.v. *Peroz*.

[120] *Bella*, 2, 25.

the pre-eminence and use of the infantry, that it was unnecessary to say anything about the Persians, because it was apparent to all.[121] He must have been referring to some victory of the Persians over the Romans, in which the superiority of the infantry over cavalry was evident: this might have been the encounter between Persians and Romans described by Procopius,[122] when 4,000 Persians emerging from the fortress of Doubios easily managed to defeat a Roman army that was much larger but disorganised and including cavalry, on which alone they were counting.[123]

This encounter took place in 543, and is not of slight importance—as might at first seem—since Procopius could affirm (2, 25, 33) that it was a disaster like none other; now, if the anonymous author really was thinking of this episode (it seems unlikely that all its features should occur again), the *terminus ad quem* would be 543, which would give a more precise chronological framework: since the event was 'under the eyes of everyone' when the author was writing (ὀφθαλμοῖς ὁρῶμεν), it cannot have been far from 543.

This confirms what almost all scholars acknowledge, that is to say that the dialogue of the Vatican palimpsest is not the work of Petros Patricius;[124] it is therefore superfluous to dwell on other aspects, such as scarce compatibility between a Petros Patricius who was an important functionary loyal to the imperial family, as everything leads us to suppose, and the anonymous author, in a number of respects.[125] We do not know whether any trace of theoretical reflection on history or politics was present in his Ἱστορίαι, of which only eighteen fragments survive, thanks to Constantine Porphyrogennetos and his *excerpta de legationibus*[126] and *de sententiis*;[127] the only exception is the first fragment consisting of two citations in the *Lexikon Seguerianum*,[128] Πέτρου εἰς τὰ περὶ Ἀντονίου and Πέτρου εἰς τὰ τῆς μοναρχίας Καίσαρος.

The *Histories*, therefore, probably covered the period from the sec-

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[121] 5, 41–2.
[122] *Bella*, 2, 25.
[123] *Ibid.*, 2, 25, 31–35.
[124] Valdenberg implicitly accepted Mai's identification, in "Les idées politiques dans les fragments attribués à Pierre le Patrice", *Byzantion* 2 (1925) 55–76.
[125] Mazzucchi proposes identifying one of the two interlocutors as the author, *op. cit.*, 246–247.
[126] Ed. C. De Boor (Berolini 1903).
[127] Ed. U.P. Boissevain (Berolini 1906).
[128] *Perì syntaxeos, Cod. Coislianus Anecd.* Bekker, I, 149, 130.

ond triumvirate until the Gallic campaigns of Julian the Apostate, Caesar to Constantius II. Interest in ancient history, which was a feature of Περὶ πολιτικῆς καταστάσεως, is also fully manifested in the *Histories*, evidently; Petros' choice is not due solely to the fact that history from Julian the Apostate onwards was treated fully, whereas Eunapius, and thus Zosimus, had expounded the events of the last eighty-five years somewhat summarily: for the earlier history of the empire he had to go back to sources almost 300 years earlier, among the Greek authors, in order to have more detailed information.

In fact, Petros seems to have had more natural sympathy with the earlier material, as appears from the fragments of the *Histories*, all except the first of which deal with subjects in some fashion connected to ancient embassies, and for this reason the object of Constantine's *Excerpta*; this is a subject which does not leave much scope for those who would seek to discover the outlines of his thinking and the range of his historical vision, even though there is nothing to suggest that the whole work was restricted to subjects of a documentary nature. But there is more: the exposition of this subject often reproduces, almost *ad verbum*, the text of Cassius Dio (e.g. in fragments 1, 2, 5, 7), and it may be that the *Histories* of Petros are *nihil aliud quam Dionis breviarium*, as Niebuhr thought.

We have to ask then what sort of historian Petros was, if his exposition was for the most part limited to antiquarian documentation, and if even this was prevalently nothing but an almost literal reproduction of other sources; that he was certainly not a great historian, but that he was a good politician and an able diplomat, one knows and one easily intuits. Yet he attracted high praise, during his lifetime, which is perhaps not explained if we interpret in these terms his personality in its essential lineaments: while much of the praise may have referred to his political or forensic activity,[129] in his work as a historian we must find the significant factors in the judgement of those who exalted his teaching, as well as his rhetorical art, including Chosroes.[130]

It is therefore likely that the single-tendency selections of Constantine Porphyrogennetos and of Menander the Guardsman have in some fashion penalised the historian Petros; the subject he dealt with, the

[129] E.g. Menander, fr. 11 and 15; Suidas, s.v.; *vir eloquentissimus, . . . disertissimus*, Cassiod., *Var.*, 10, 19, 23ff.; etc.

[130] Menander, fr. 11.

interests he cultivated and the attitudes he manifested in his vision of history must have ranged much further than the bare antiquarian documentation presented in the surviving fragments. It is true that Johannes Lydus was his client, but one cannot believe that he was making everything up when[131] he spoke of a "sound master of universal history", and of the matter he dealt with as *kataskeué* and *exousìa* of political events, as well as embassies, arms, etc.; in such a thematic perspective, room might be found for various subjects, from the army to State doctrine, even though with regard to the Vatican palimpsest there are other difficulties, as we have seen.

There again, Menander the Guardsman—later—cites a *synagogé* of Petros relating to the diplomatic negotiations of 562 between the author himself and the king of Persia, and uses it fully in his exposition;[132] it was a work of a certain size and of great documentary precision, as appears,[133] fully reproducing all the discussions and the attitudes manifested during the lengthy negotiations. There is no other mention of this *syngraphé* of Petros; to find an allusion to it, we probably have to resort once again to Joannes Lydus (*loc. cit.*) and his mention of the embassies in which he had taken part. If so, his interest as a historian would assume a wider perspective: however the principal characteristic would still be the institutional, antiquarian one, possibly also in its theoretical aspects (he devoted sleepless nights to philosophical speculation [Joannes Lydus, *loc. cit.*]).

The wide range, as we may presume, of the historical vision of Petros Patricius would assume more definite lineaments if he were indeed the so-called *Anonymus post Dionem*, that is to say if he were the author of the *excerpta* which in the Vatican palimpsest closely follow Cassius Dio, down to the time of Constantine the Great (whereas it is known that Cassius Dio's history ends with 229, the eighth year of Severus Alexander). But it is a hypothesis which—although authoritative, going back to Niebuhr[134]—causes some perplexity; Angelo Mai had though of John of Antioch, author of a universal chronicle, surviving for the most part in Constantine's *excerpta*, composed after 610, which runs from Adam to the beginning of Heraclius' reign. But the very notion of a universal chronicle seems hardly compatible

[131] *De magistr.*, 2, 25ff.
[132] Fr. 11 (especially), but also 12, 13, 15.
[133] Fr. 12.
[134] In *CSHB* I (1829), XXIV–XXV.

with the fullness of information which the fragments by the anonymous author lead us to expect, to say nothing of the source he uses for the period from Commodus to Gordian, a different source from the Herodian used by John of Antioch.

These objections are some of those advanced by Müller;[135] he also produced objections to Niebuhr's hypothesis of Petros Patricius' authorship,[136] which was also contested, in more recent times, by Mazzarino, who emphasised the contrast between Petros Patricicus' version and that of the anonymous author regarding the fate of Valerian after his encounter with the king of Persia, Shapur.[137] Petros gives the version in which Valerian is captured by deceit,[138] whereas the anonymous author has the emperor being taken in battle (at least indirectly, if this is how the absence of Macrinus/Macrianus from the field of battle is to be interpreted).[139] According to Mazzarino this is a total contradiction, sufficient to render inadmissible the identification of the anonymous author with Petros Patricius; but in fact the assimilation of the former to the version of Valerian δορυάλωτος is not so simple and obvious, given that the 'invitation' to Macrianus, from the Persian king, to visit Valerian is presented as a trick. In practice, something similar had happened in Valerian's own case: he too had been 'invited' by the king of Persia,[140] he had fallen into the trap and had been taken prisoner by Shapur, whereas Macrianus, with Valerian's unfortunate experience to guide him, was more prudent (the emperor having behaved with complete lack of prudence), foreseeing that if he went to visit Shapur he too would be made prisoner (another aspect of the analogy is the condition of αἰχμάλωτος reserved for the emperor by Shapur,[141] the same which Macrianus foresees for himself[142] should he visit Valerian).

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[135] *F.H.G.*, IV, 191.

[136] A particularly important contribution in favour of Petros Patricius's authorship is that of C. de Boor, "Römische Kaisergeschichte im byzant. Fassung I des Anonymos post Dionem", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* I (1892), 13–33.

[137] Mazzarino, "L'*Anonymus post Dionem* e la 'topica' delle guerre romano-persiane 242/4 d.C.–283/4", in *La Persia nel Medio Evo*, Atti del conv. Acc. dei Lincei (Roma 1970), 655–678, and then in *idem, Il basso impero, op. cit.*, II, 69–103.

[138] Fr. 13.

[139] We find the reading *doryalotos* in Evagr., *H.E.*, 3, 41 and in Zonar., 12, 23.

[140] Zosim., 1, 36, 2.

[141] *Ibid.*, ἐν αἰχμαλώτου τάξει.

[142] On the double tradition Macrinus/Macrianus see also Mazzarino, "L'*Anonymus post Dionem* . . .", *op. cit.*, 72–73 note 9.

In fact, it is not very clear why Macrianus should have given himself up as a prisoner to the king of Persia, going to visit Valerian after the emperor had been captured in battle, nor is it clear what the king's request was based on, what interest he had, and how he could expect Macrianus to accede to his request: Cledonios' request, in the name of the Persian king, was not the act of a victor on the field of battle (as is also shown by Macrianus' reply). In practice, Macrianus could perhaps only have been made prisoner in this way, by deceit, since because of his mutilated foot he devoted himself to the service of the soldiers, remaining at Samosata, and did not take part in the actions of war. In fact it is extremely likely that he was not thinking so much about looking after the soldiers and curing them, as about drawing them over to his side with a view to seizing power: a good reason,[143] probably, for Shapur to want to get rid of him, as he had got rid of Valerian, by a treacherous invitation.

As regards the expression ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ, there is no doubt that it can refer to a battle, and not to the war, as Mazzarino helpfully points out (*loc. cit.*, 78–79); but what does not necessarily follow from this is that Valerian was really a prisoner of war, that is to say *doryàlotos*. He was in fact kept prisoner as *aichmalotos*, according to the version which has him captured by a trick,[144] and the *Anonymus post Dionem* probably alludes to the emperor as *aichmalotos* (e.g. Macrianus foresees that he will become δοῦλος καὶ αἰχμάλωτος if he goes to visit Valerian); on the other hand, in the same text, Shapur's envoy Cledonios, once he had returned, was kept prisoner among the *aichmalotoi*, which means that he was not one, but like Valerian was ἐν αἰχμαλώτου τάξει. And, if such was Cledonios, the 'functionary' of Valerian in the hands of Shapur, and sent by him to Macrianus, it is difficult to believe that, according to the same *Anomymus*, Valerian too was not in the same condition.

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[143] For this meaning of ἀνακτάομαι cf. for example Herodot., 1, 50; Xenoph., *Cyrop.*, 1, 3, 9 and 2, 2, 10; it is not impossible that the ambiguity to which this verb can give rise was intentional; on this point and on its implications see J.F. Drinkwater, "The 'Catastrophe' of 260: towards a more favourable assessment of the Emperor Valerian I", *Rivista storica dell'Antichità*, 19 (1989), 123–135 (especially 131–132) and B. Bleckmann, "Zu den Quellen der Vita Gallieni duo", in *Historiae Augustae Colloquium Maceratense*, edited by G. Bonamente and G. Paci (Bari 1995), 75–103 (especially 82–84).

[144] Zosim., I, 36, 2.

It is however probable that the identity of Petros Patricius with the *Anon. post Dionem* is not to be altogether excluded; nevertheless one should take into consideration Mazzarino's proposal to identify the *Anonymus* with Eustathius of Epiphania: if Eustathius was the source of Evagrius, and if the *Anon. post Dionem* was the source of Zonaras (both suppositions are quite plausible and to some degree may be documented), the substantial coincidence of the two versions (in this case the capture of Valerian in the field of battle) would certainly make possible the identification of Eustathius with the *Anonymus p. D.*[145] But it is not so obvious that Valerian was *doryalotos* in the version of the *Anon. p. D.*; on the other hand, in Zonaras we find, as well as the version of Valerian as *doryalotos*, another version, according to which the emperor spontaneously delivered himself up to the king of Persia.[146] This is a version which is certainly compatible with the one involving a trick—Petros Patricius' version—quite independently of the interpretation, more or less malevolent, which could be put upon such a decision taken by an emperor who was a pagan and a persecutor: if so, Petros Patricius himself could have been the ultimate source, and since Zonaras evidently knew the *An. p. D.* well (following it sometimes *ad verbum*), the identification could be consequential, given that the *Anonymus*' version, at least, does not contradict Zonaras', and in fact the two versions substantially coincide[147] (who could deny, in fact, had gone ἑκόντα to Shapur without foreseeing any treachery?).[148]

The antique historian Petros Patricius thus assumes more definite lineaments if he is in indeed also the *Anon. p. D.*: the investigation of earlier centuries, and especially of the 3rd century, would turn up many topical matters for period such as Justinian's, when the need for renewal was deeply felt but when inspiration was sought

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[145] The problem is re-examined by B. Bleckmann, *Die Reichskrise des III. Jahrhunderts in der spätantiken und byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung* (München 1992), 97–106; see also J.-P. Callu, "D'Évagre à l'Histoire Auguste" in *Historiae Augustae Colloquium Genevense*, edited by G. Bonamente and F. Paschoud (Bari 1995), 75–103 (especially 82–84).

[146] Zonar., 12, 23.

[147] An exhaustive examination of the sources (with particular reference to the 'Res gestae' of King Shapur) is in X. Loriot, "Les premières années de la grande crise du III^{e} siècle: De l'avènement de Maximin le Thrace (235) à la mort de Gordien III (244)", in *ANRW*, II, 2 (1975), 757–775 [lit.].

[148] On the same problem see Mazzarino, "*L'Anon. post Dionem . . .*", *Il basso impero, op. cit.*, 69–103; on other aspects connected with the *Anonymus post Dionem*, see Mazzarino, *ibid.*, 26–32 and 33–68.

in tradition. The problem of the *Herrscherideal* or of the *libertas* of the barbarians, for example, are opportunely recalled; in this context, Petros Patricius who was the contemporary of Procopius, but was more fortunate than he in his public career, seems to be the expression of the imperial line, which he served both as a historian and as a politician; Procopius was in some respects his very opposite.

A Witness: Nonnosos

Rather than a historian, Nonnosos may be called a writer of memoirs, for such indeed is his work, which has come down to us in a brief extract preserved by Photius (*Bibl. cod.* 3). He came from a family of ambassadors: his grandfather Euphrasius was sent by Anastasius in 502 to Aretas of Kinda, and his father Abrames was sent several times, from 524, to Kaïsos of Kinda, nephew of Aretas, the last time after the mission on which Nonnosos himself was sent by Justinian.

Abrames managed to conclude a peace, bringing back to Byzantium the son of Kaïsos, Mauïas, as a hostage; Nonnosos was entrusted with a double task, to lead Kaïsos to the emperor, if possible, and to reach the king of the Axumites, at that time Alesbaas, and go to the Omerites as well. These and other matters are narrated by Nonnosos in his account of the journey, including the difficulties and the ambushes he encountered; despite these he successfully accomplished his mission and returned home safe and sound. He was especially attracted by the ethnographical aspects of his journey, such as the rites of the Saracens, with their assemblies in the spring and at the time of the summer solstice, when peace reigns among men and among animals.

He was astonished by the sight of elephants grazing in a vast plain around Aue, between Axum and Aduli, to the number of five thousand; and he was no less astonished by the sight of tiny men and women with black skin, covered with hair, who had human voices although they spoke an incomprehensible tongue: they were lacking in courage, were not violent and were timorous in the presence of Nonnosos' men, just as the men themselves would have been in the presence of wild beasts. These stories of adventure were not however to overshadow the exposition of facts specifically pertinent to the scope of the mission; in fact, accounts of diplomatic journeys

had become commonplace, if we think of Petros Patricius (see above), or of Julian, whom Justinian entrusted with an embassy to the Ethiopians and the Omeriti, so as to convince them to take his side against the Persians.[149]

We could establish the date and nature of Nonnosos' embassy with greater precision if it were part of the same plan that sent Julian to Ethiopia and southern Arabia; this is not unlikely, if the mission of Nonnosos is to be dated between 528 (after his father's) and 533, and the mission of Julian in 531, and if the two missions had the same purpose, to attack Persia on both the commercial and the military plane.[150] That the two missions were indeed part of a single plan is suggested by a comparison between the extract of Nonnosos, where there is no mention of Julian, and the account given by Procopius (*Bella*, 1, 20, 9–13), where there is no mention of Nonnosos: the theatre and the actors seem however to be substantially the same.[151]

I feel however that a degree of prudence is required, especially as there seems to be a difference between the two texts regarding the position of Kaïsos in relation to Maadeni/Maddeni: he is his 'phylarchos', according to Nonnosos,[152] whereas according to Procopius he was yet to be appointed 'phylarchos'.[153] In any case, Nonnosos deserves credit for his honesty in admitting implicitly the failure of his mission, which was supposed to bring Kaïsos to the emperor, since Kaïsos in fact came to Byzantium later, as the result of a mission led by Nonnosos' father.

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[149] E.g. Theoph., *Chron.*, 1, 244 C. De Boor.

[150] In this connection cf. I. Kawar, "Byzantion und Kinda", *Byzant. Zeitschrift* 53 (1960) 57ff., with other sources and bibl.

[151] For other opinions cf. for example J.B. Bury, *History*, II, 326; G. Olinder, "The Kings of Kinda and of the Family of Akil al-Murar", *Lunds Universitets Årsskrift*, N.S. (Lund 1927) 115ff.; see also J. Doresse, *L'empire du Prêtre-Jean* (Paris 1857) 174–5; E. Stein, *Histoire du B.-E.*, II, 298ff. and G. Marasco, Un viaggiatore diplomatico bizantino in Africa al tempo di Giustiniano: Nonnoso, in "L'Africa romana," Atti del convegno di studi (Djerba 10–13 dicembre 1998), Roma 2000, 175–181.

[152] Except that, in this case, the verb ἐχρημάτιζε does not refer only to the title of *phylarchos* but to the effective discharging of his office on the part of Kaïsos.

[153] *Bella*, 1, 20, 9.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE CHURCH HISTORIANS AND CHALCEDON

Michael Whitby

Introduction

The Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in 451 was an event of fundamental importance for the definition of Christian doctrine and organization of the Church, including the question of its relations with secular authorities. If it ranks behind the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea (325 A.D.), in some ways the consequences of Chalcedon for the development of the Church were as momentous.[1] Chalcedon confirmed that the Nestorians would not belong to the true Church of the Eastern Roman Empire, and so contributed to their withdrawal into Persia shortly thereafter; in exile Nestorian missionaries energetically propagated their faith, sending missionaries eastwards to India and along the silk route to China. Chalcedon also constituted the key division for Christians within the Roman Empire. Bits of the Eastern Empire never accepted the orthodoxy of Chalcedon, partly because it did not appear to exclude the threat posed to the unity of Christ by the ideas of Nestorius, partly because the distinctive Christological language of the greatest eastern theologian, Cyril of Alexandria, seemed to have been compromised through accommodation to the views of Pope Leo; the Council had also legitimated certain prominent supporters of Nestorian views who had been hostile to Cyril of Alexandria, and anathematized key opponents. This perception might be a gross simplification, but it came to be the preferred version of events especially in the Empire's eastern provinces where Coptic, Syriac or Armenian, rather than Greek, were the languages of debate: translation inevitably helped

[1] For Nicaea and Chalcedon as twin peaks in the development of Christian doctrine, see F.M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon, a guide to the literature and its background* (London, 1983); and for the importance of Chalcedon, A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon, Geschichte und Gegenwart* I–II (Wurzburg, 1951–53).

to consolidate misconceptions about the opinions of participants and to thwart rational persuasion. Chalcedon also drove a wedge between eastern and western Mediterranean, partly because of rivalry between Rome and Constantinople, whose pretensions to eastern primacy had been endorsed at the Council, partly because the Eastern Empire was thereafter faced by a clash of priorities which could not be reconciled: unity in the east entailed the abandonment of key aspects of Chalcedon, and, as it turned out, formal condemnation of the Council; good relations between Constantinople and Rome required adherence to the Chalcedonian doctrinal definition as enshrined in the Tome of Pope Leo, which represented papal claims to doctrinal leadership of the universal Church. Chalcedon established a cycle of east-west suspicion and hostility which persisted throughout the next millenium of Roman imperial history.[2]

These wide-ranging responses to Chalcedon were shaped by the different perceptions of the Council enshrined in the historiographical tradition. It is the purpose of this chapter to investigate how these perceptions were constructed and sustained through identification of key figures as heroes or bogeymen, selective reporting of the Council's decisions, and critical assessment of those men of power, mostly emperors and patriarchs, who had to come to terms with the problem of the Council. We have the materials to identify how the three main strands of opinion within the Empire, Monophysites, imperial Chalcedonians in the east, and papal Chalcedonians in the west came to define the inheritance of the Council, how their respective propagandists used selected collections of documentary materials, such as conciliar *acta* and letters, *florilegia*, and historiography to corroborate their opinions and convince their audiences, and how attitudes developed in the 150 years after the Council.[3] At the same time this permits a study of the last phase of late antique ecclesiastical historiography, and assessment of the genre's characteristics and vitality.

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[2] For later developments, see J. Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* (Princeton, 1987).

[3] The material is surveyed in A. Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition* II.1, trans. P. Allen and J. Cawte (London, 1987), 20–39, 53–73.

Contemporary Responses

The tradition of ecclesiastical historiography in Greek divides neatly into three sections: Eusebius narrates the trials of the young Church down to its imperial takeover under Constantine; three Theodosian writers, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, deal with the Arian controversy from Nicaea, through the neo-Arian initiatives under Constantius II and Valens, to the blessings which triumphant orthodoxy and imperial piety produced for Theodosius II; Evagrius then picks up the story 150 years later to describe the great Christological dispute triggered by Nestorius and the subsequent attempts by emperors and bishops to re-establish unity. In reality the divisions are somewhat less neat, since lost histories such as the massive work composed by Philip of Side in the 430s covered more than one period,[4] but it is still reasonable to see the appointment of Nestorius as bishop of Constantinople in 428 as the event which introduced a new phase in doctrinal history. When a later writer such as Theodore Lector wanted to produce a complete history of the Church, he did so by reproducing Eusebius, combining the Theodosian trinity into a single narrative, and then composing his own account.[5]

This periodization does, however, conceal significant choices made by the respective authors. Eusebius extended his *History* at least once,[6] but, even though he narrated the events of Constantine's reign in the *Vita Constantini*,[7] he did not attempt to extend his main historical narrative to include the Council of Nicaea and associated debates. An obvious explanation was his own dislike of the expression 'consubstantial', which caused problems for him at Nicaea although he appeared to regain imperial favour towards the end of Constantine's

[4] We know of Philip's monumental work, which stretched from the Creation to 430 in 30 books, from Socrates *HE* 7.27, who complained that it was so comprehensive as to be useless.

[5] For discussion of Theodore, see below.

[6] See T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 148–50, for the various stages.

[7] On this work, whose approach is panegyrical rather than historical, see Averil Cameron, "Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* and the Construction of Constantine", in M.J. Edwards and S. Swain (edd.), *Portraits, Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1997), 145–74, with references to the substantial previous bibliography; now also Averil Cameron and Stuart B. Hall, *Eusebius*, Life of Constantine; *translated with introduction and commentary* (Oxford, 1999). See also Winckelmann, above in Part I, Chapter 1.

life. The Theodosian trio were similarly reticent about major contemporary problems in the Church, though, to differing extents, they introduce secular events to demonstrate divine favour for the current emperor.[8] The first of the three, Socrates, who completed his narrative *circa* 440, in fact continued his account slightly longer than his two successors, since at least he was prepared to confront the issue of Nestorius (*HE* 7.29–32): he declined to report all Nestorius' disciplinary actions during his patriarchy (428–31), and described his opinions as folly rather than heresy. The final chapters refer to the mildness of Bishop Proclus of Constantinople (434–47), who meekly refused to permit persecution. Sozomen wrote somewhat later, probably in the 440s though some scholars date him after the death of Theodosius in 450, and he exploited Socrates' history extensively.[9] His account is often regarded as unfinished, on the grounds that the final book is substantially shorter than the previous eight (about half the average length), and ends abruptly with the discovery of the relics of Zachariah, which is presented as one sign of God's favour for the emperor (*HE* 9.16–17). It is possible that Sozomen died in the middle of composition, or that the end of the book was lost, but it may also be significant that the text ends at a very convenient point. The piety and virtue of Pulcheria have been praised at length (*HE* 9.1, 5), and divine assistance for Theodosius II has been demonstrated (*HE* 9.5, 16). However, by stopping short of the issues associated with Nestorius Sozomen was spared an awkward narrative of the vacillations of Theodosius in the 430s, at first the champion of Nestorius but then won over to Cyril of Alexandria's position, and of the estrangement between Theodosius and Pulcheria, first over Nestorius and then fomented by the rivalries of the Empress Eudocia and the chamberlain Chrysaphius in the early 440s.[10]

If Sozomen's treatment of Theodosius is suspiciously short, Theodoret's is even briefer. He praised the piety of the imperial family, which preserved the Empire from attacks by Huns and Persians (*HE*

[8] For discussion, see J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, "Ecclesiastical Historians on their own Times", *Studia Patristica* 24 (1993), 151–63.

[9] On the relationship see T. Urbainczyk, "Observations on the Differences between the Church Histories of Socrates and Sozomen", *Historia* 46 (1997), 355–73. For the dating to the 440s, see C. Roueché, "Theodosius II, the Cities, and the Date of the 'Church History' of Sozomen", *JTS* 27 (1986), 130–2.

[10] Also, if Sozomen was writing *circa* 450, he would have experienced Theodosius' support in his latter years for the heretical monk Eutyches.

5.36–7), but then closed his history with the death in 428 of Theodore of Mopsuestia, disciple of the celebrated Diodore of Tarsus, a great teacher and opponent of all heresies (*HE* 5.40). Granted the links which were made between Nestorius and both Theodore and Diodore, Theodoret's choice of conclusion is polemical, but he did not want to embark on the Nestorian narrative since his opposition to Cyril of Alexandria had been unsuccessful in the aftermath of the First Council of Ephesus:[11] in the 440s he had come under attack himself as a Nestorian, and the emperor Theodosius was among his fiercest critics.

Contemporary ecclesiastical historians found it difficult to cope with the complexities and changes of disputes in the 430s and 440s, but the beginnings of a narrative could be constructed by those with less concern for objectivity and balance. Personalities were a significant aspect of the dispute, and personal reputations were to become an insoluble issue. These were established, in part, by the correspondence and other dogmatic writings of the key actors, especially Cyril of Alexandria (412–44) and Nestorius,[12] but both Nestorius and Timothy Aelurus (patriarch of Alexandria, 457–76) also composed narrative accounts, which naturally will have presented their own perspectives on events. Both works are lost, though some indication of their contents can be derived from Evagrius and John Rufus. There are also hagiographical treatments of Nestorius and Dioscorus of Alexandria (444–51), which are useful in showing how some of the antagonists were perceived posthumously by their supporters.

Evagrius (*HE* 1.7) proudly recorded the discovery of a work in which Nestorius defended his actions and described his exile. Nestorius presented himself as a man whose attempts to secure compromise in a bitter doctrinal dispute had led to his downfall; he asserted that the records of the First Council of Ephesus were also falsified by Cyril. Nestorius emphasized, correctly, that he enjoyed the Emperor Theodosius' support, and that his departure from Constantinople in 431 was at his own request. He remained at his monastery near

[11] Thus Theodoret's position was analogous to that of Eusebius in the aftermath of Nicaea. Alan Cameron, "The Empress and the Poet: Paganism and Politics at the Court of Theodosius II", *Yale Classical Studies* 27 (1982), 217–89, at 265–6, though opting for a late date of composition, in 450, speculates that Sozomen would have been reluctant to narrate the embarrassing developments of the 440s.

[12] On Cyril, see J.A. McGuckin, *St Cyril of Alexandria, The Christological Controversy: Its History, Theology and Texts*, *Vigiliae Christianae* Suppl. 23 (Leiden, 1994).

Antioch until 435, when he was banished to Egypt by an imperial decree whose origin Nestorius did not explain. In Egypt Nestorius had to endure an unsettled existence, since he was captured by raiding tribesmen and was then passed around by provincial officials who appear to have been uncertain where to keep their awkward guest. Sympathetic writers developed this presentation. In the *Letter to Cosmas*, a Greek work now surviving in Syriac and attributed to a multiplicity of authors,[13] Nestorius' problems as patriarch are implicitly assimilated to those of the great John Chrysostom through emphasis on his dispute with the Augusta Pulcheria over vestments, a portrait, and communion; John, of course, had been driven into exile by the machinations of Theophilus of Alexandria, the predecessor and uncle of Cyril. In exile Nestorius demonstrated his sanctity by various miracles, curing a blind man, producing water in the desert when being led off by tribesmen who promptly liberated his fellow captives in gratitude, and, even in death, resuscitating a corpse at his tomb and so delivering an innocent priest from an accusation of murder (*Letter* 5–8; 12–14). The authors confess that some scoff at these miracles, and that people were not particularly interested in what Nestorius had done. The opponents of Nestorius soon produced counter-miracles.[14]

This presentation was developed in Barhadbeshabba's *Ecclesiastical History*, a late-sixth century Syriac narrative which provided the basis for subsequent Nestorian histories:[15] Satan stirred up the Jews against Nestorius, and Cyril of Alexandria was prompted by Jewish thoughts; at Ephesus in 431 there was considerable violence, and Cyril deliberately convened the council before John of Antioch could arrive, while at court Cyril deployed bribery to secure support; John of

[13] *Letter to Cosmas*, ed. and French trans. by F. Nau, *PO* 13 (1916), 271–86. The letter is attributed to Count Candidianus (the chief imperial representative at the First Council of Ephesus), Elias the *stratelates*, Count Sophronius, the monks Elias and Paul, Artemon *paramonarios*, Peter the Archdeacon, Parthenius the treasurer, and unnamed others. The extant text comprises the letter proper (1–10), which is datable to 435, and then some miracles which the monk Elias recounted in Alexandria after 458.

[14] Besa's *Life* of the Monophysite Shenute of Atripe (trans. D.N. Bell, *Cistercian Studies Series* 73, Kalamazoo, 1983), records that he secured the release of a haul of captives by paralysing the hands of Blemmyan tribesmen; also in *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum III, from the first to the sixth century A.D.*, edd. T. Eide, T. Hägg, R. Pierce, L. Török (Bergen, 1998), 1107–9.

[15] Barhadbeshabba, *Ecclesiastical History* ed. and French trans. by F. Nau, *PO* 9 (1913), 489–631 (Part II), and 23 (1932), 177–343 (Part I).

Antioch finally abandoned Nestorius out of jealousy for his popularity. On route to exile Nestorius was harassed and taunted by Cyril's supporters, but his sanctity was again proved by the water miracle; he also knew the moment of Cyril's death. The Emperor Marcian ordered his return, an elaboration of the imperial summons to attend the Council at Chalcedon, though he died before this could be effected.

In the *Plerophories*, or *Proofs*, of John Rufus (John of Beth Rufina), a work composed in Greek during the Patriarchate of Severus of Antioch (512–18) but extant now only in Syriac,[16] there are two references to an *Ecclesiastical History* by Timothy Aelurus. Both concern Nestorius' death, which is taken as a proof of his wickedness: while confined in the appropriately named City of Pan (i.e. Panopolis),[17] he received news of his recall by Marcian, but he was already seriously ill and could not be saved by doctors summoned from nearby cities (36); after the recall he lost his tongue, and the earth refused to accept his body for burial (33). The manner of a person's death was a significant indication of their acceptability to God,[18] and Nestorius' end had clearly become a contentious issue between supporters and opponents. The anti-Chalcedonian tradition, however, accepted the validity of the imperial recall for Nestorius, but used this to blacken Marcian's reputation and show God's superior power.

Although not an Ecclesiastical History, the *Plerophories* collects miracle stories, many from the circle of Peter the Iberian (bishop of Maiuma near Gaza, 451–91), whose *Life* John also composed.[19] Such stories constituted one type of proof on which a historical narrative might draw:[20] since the *Plerophories* is not particularly well-known, it is worth briefly analysing the contents to identify what individuals and issues were regarded as important in the late fifth century. At a general level the Council of Chalcedon itself is of central concern:

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[16] John Rufus, *Plerophories*, ed. and trans. by F. Nau, *PO* 8 (1911), 5–208. Brief discussion in W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement: Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Century* (Cambridge, 1972), 150–1.

[17] Appropriate because Pan combined two natures, man and beast.

[18] The classic example is the death of Arius in Constantinople, at the public latrines near the Forum of Constantine.

[19] On Peter, see D.M. Lang, "Peter the Iberian and his Biographers", *JEH* 2 (1951) 158–68.

[20] For example, the *Plerophories* were used by John of Ephesus for his *History*: J.J. van Ginkel, *John of Ephesus, A Monophysite Historian in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (D.Litt. dissertation, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1995), 58.

Chalcedon made God withdraw support from the Empire, as is revealed by the capture of Rome and its subjugation to barbarians, since it was from Rome that the blasphemy of Leo's letter, the treasury of all impiety, emanated (89, pp. 150–1). Therefore the bishops who participated in the Council are also harshly criticized: Satan predicts that the bishops in Council would adore him (9). Abba Andrew had a vision of bishops gathered around a blazing furnace into which they threw a pure child, who, however, emerged safe after three days; Christ then observed that "The bishops have crucified me again and decided to strip me of my glory", which the author observes was correct since Nestorians suffered from the sickness of the Jews. Only one bishop stood apart from this performance, the upright Dioscorus (14). The author, however, also had to deploy Biblical prototypes to counter the argument that most people adhered to Chalcedon (55). The champions of the text are Dioscorus and Timothy Aelurus, neatly demonstrated in a vision which Timothy had when Dioscorus departed for the Council: Dioscorus went to a church of the Baptist, but all the clergy turned away from him, with the exception of Timothy; a raging wolf approached Dioscorus and bit his backside, but it was toothless and Dioscorus was not hurt; a soldier then killed the wolf, who is identified as Proterius, the imperially-sponsored replacement for Dioscorus who was prepared to accept Chalcedon (patriarch, 451–7).

Proterius naturally is one of the villains of the piece, and he is even made to supply two prophecies against himself, that Dioscorus' tyrannical successor would be expelled by Timothy and that Dioscorus would be succeded by the Antichrist (68–9), but he is overshadowed by the archvillain Juvenal of Jerusalem (422–58), the patriarch who had gone to Chalcedon as a supporter of Dioscorus only to switch to the winning side on the first day.[21] There is a vision of Juvenal, black like a boilerman, gathering gold for the Antichrist who is about to appear (20), and there are numerous predictions against him and stories of upright individuals who avoided his company (e.g. 17–18, 79); he is compared to Simon Magus and Judas, or is a reincarnation of Nestorius, while his former monastery was stricken at the time of the Council and remained deserted thereafter (25, 40, 16). Quite apart from being a significant factor at Chalcedon, Juvenal's

[21] For his long and tortuous career, see E. Honigmann, "Juvenal of Jerusalem", *DOP* 5 (1950), 209–79.

change of heart caused major disruption in Palestine where many of John's stories originated.

At imperial level the favoured pair of Theodosius and Eudocia are balanced by the wicked Marcian and Pulcheria.[22] Whereas Eudocia provided benefactions and was friendly with good monks (11, 20), Pulcheria sacrificed her virginity along with her orthodoxy in order to share the Empire, impiety and punishment of Marcian (3). One visionary put Theodosius in heaven and Marcian in hell (27); Timothy Aelurus saw a vision of a savage horse which troubled the world until he managed to shut it in a stable, a reference to Marcian and his divinely-inflicted death (67); the sky darkened on the day of Marcian's coronation, an event which Marcian attempted to explain away by an encyclical that referred to the great mass of benefits to be expected from his reign since the darkness produced by the previous emperor was dispelled (10). The ambivalence of Theodosius' relations with Nestorius is acknowledged in one story in which the emperor decreed exile against the hermit Basil who opposed the patriarch in public; but as punishment Theodosius came close to death after being hit on the head by a tile, and Basil told him to summon a council to depose Nestorius and remove his impiety (35).

Apart from this collection of heroes and villains, one impression to emerge from the *Plerophories* is the uncertainty produced by frequent changes in the imperially sponsored definition of orthodoxy. Inconsistency could be held against the bishops who dutifully followed the imperial line from the First Council of Ephesus in 431 through to the Counter-Encyclical of Basiliscus in 475 (59). Some devout Christians required help in identifying orthodoxy. Pamprepius of Titopolis in Isauria travelled to Chalcedon with Basil of Seleucia, but was worried by its rejection of Dioscorus and reception of heretics; in response to his request a scroll on which was written 'Anathema to the Council' unfurled from heaven. Romanus, head of a monastery near Jerusalem, retreated to the desert to receive a sign; he was first told to follow the 318, i.e. the Council of Nicaea, but found this unclear; a second message was to follow the faith of the Fathers, namely Peter of Alexandria, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Athanasius, Julius of Rome, Basil, Gregory, John of Constantinople, Cyril, Celestinus, and Dioscorus,

[22] Although Pulcheria was a key supporter of Cyril of Alexandria in the 430s when Theodosius inclined towards Nestorius, her continued opposition to her brother's Christological preferences turned her into a focus for Monophysite anger.

but this was still not clear; finally a letter came down from heaven proclaiming anathema on Chalcedon (25). An important area of doubt concerned the reception of communion: Agathoclea of Alexandria had a vision of a large bare altar presided over by a bishop, as opposed to a small but rich altar attended by the faithful (86). Opponents of Chalcedon asserted that the Council, by renouncing the unity of Christ's divine and human natures, had broken the eucharistic guarantee of salvation: the efficacy of Monophysite communion was demonstrated when their host turned to blood (78); there was nothing holy about a Chalcedonian celebration (73), and even accidental attendance at such a ceremony would be held against the individual when facing eternal judgement (80).[23]

As an annex to the *Plerophories* it is worth glancing at the *Life of Dioscorus*, a text probably composed after the death of Anastasius in 518.[24] Pulcheria was shamelessly seduced by Marcian's physique, and she was a new Eve whose infatuation for Marcian was revealed when she passed on a beautiful apple which Theodosius had given her;[25] at Chalcedon she tried her personal charms on Dioscorus, without success. Marcian himself, though labelled an impious tyrant, was guided by wicked counsellors and was reluctant to confront Dioscorus, even after a blunt encounter with the patriarch; he was only per-

[23] For analysis, see H. Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy", *JTS* 2 (1951), 145–64: it could be argued that the Nestorian conception of the union of God and man in Christ did not guarantee the life-giving power of the Eucharist, since the flesh and blood of Christ represented his human element.

[24] F. Nau, "Histoire de Dioscore, écrite par son disciple Théopiste", *Journal Asiatique* 1, 10th series, (1903), 1–108, 241–310. On the work, see P. Mouterde, "La concile de Chalcédoine d'après les historiens monophysites de langue syriaque", in Grillmeier/Bacht, *Konzil* I. 581–602, at 597–601, and M. Cramer and H. Bacht, "Der antichalkedonische Aspekt im historisch-biographischen Schriften der koptischen Monophysiten (6.–7. Jh.)", in Grillmeier/Bacht, *Konzil* II. 315–38; Honigmann, "Juvenal" 265, suggested that the *Plerophories* were the source for this *Life*, but there seems to be too much independent information in the latter.

[25] In Malalas (pp. 356.17–357.19) this story is applied to the triangle of Theodosius, his wife Eudocia, and the *magister officiorum* Paulinus who was suspected of being her lover; this is probably the earlier version, since Paulinus fell from favour and was executed at about the time of Eudocia's second and final withdrawal to Jerusalem (early 440s), whereas there is no corroboration for the version in the *Life of Dioscorus* that Marcian was ever exiled to the Thebaid. Thus a rumour which discredited the imperial pair favoured by anti-Chalcedonians was turned against the instigators of the Council. For discussion of Eudocia, see Alan Cameron, "Empress" 258–62; K.G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses. Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1982) ch. 6.

suaded to proceed with the Council after his consultation of the Egyptian monk John of Scetis was thwarted by accursed Nestorians, who used bribery to alter the monk's response. Dioscorus stood up resolutely to imperial pressure, and refused to be cowed by the apparent superiority of the position of Pope Leo; after all, Pope Celestine, the ally of Cyril at Ephesus in 431, had predicted that he would be followed by a murderous wolf, and when Marcian urged the need to follow the primacy of Rome Dioscorus countered with the observation that Satan was the first of creation. At Chalcedon the bishops were not inclined to obey imperial wishes, and rejected the reading of Pope Leo's Tome as heretical, even when it was cunningly attached to the Nicene creed. Imperial pressure was applied, to leave Dioscorus objecting to the admission of Ibas, Theodoret and Andrew and cursing the traitor Juvenal. In this presentation the twin architects of Chalcedon, Emperor Marcian and Pope Leo, are thoroughly blackened.

Zachariah

The first major anti-Chalcedonian narrative of which we have reasonable information is the *Ecclesiastical History* by Zachariah of Mitylene, composed in Greek in the 490s, in the early years of Anastasius' reign.[26] Although the original work does not survive, it was used by a Syriac author writing in Mesopotamia under Justin II, in 569.[27] This man, known for the sake of convenience—or confusion—as pseudo-Zachariah, presented in books iii–vi of his account an abridged version of Zachariah: "translated concisely and briefly (so to speak) in contracted style, for the information of the Syriac reader, from the Greek History of Zachariah the Rhetorician; which he wrote thus far, in protracted style, after the manner of Greek amplification".[28]

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[26] Zachariah of Mitylene, *The Ecclesiastical History of Ps.-Zachariah of Mitylene*, English trans. F.J. Hamilton and E.W. Brooks (London, 1899); Latin trans. E.W. Brooks in *CSCO* 87–8, *Scr. Syri* 41–4 (Louvain, 1924). Discussion in E. Honigmann, *Patristic Studies* (Vatican, 1953), 194–204; P. Allen, "Zachariah Scholasticus and the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Evagrius Scholasticus", *JTS* 31 (1980), 471–88.

[27] For discussion see Hamilton and Brooks, *Zachariah* 4–5.

[28] Ps.-Zach. *HE* 6.7 (translation of Hamilton and Brooks p. 146). The subsequent narrative of Pseudo-Zachariah used the lost Part Two of John of Ephesus' *Ecclesiastical History* as one of its sources; the author also had access to quite detailed informa-

Zachariah's account began with Chalcedon: "The first chapter of this book [iii] tells about the events which occurred in the synod, being taken from the history of one Zachariah by name, who begins to write in Greek to Eupraxius [an imperial minister] as follows."[29] The material in Pseudo-Zachariah can be supplemented from Evagrius who, though writing as a supporter of Chalcedon and criticizing Zachariah as a partisan writer (e.g. *HE* 2.2), used him as a main source for the reigns of Leo and Zeno (457–91), as well as for Marcian (450–7);[30] later Syriac authors, such as the twelfth-century Michael the Syrian, appear to have used pseudo-Zachariah rather than Zachariah.[31] It should be clear that conclusions about Zachariah's *History* must be tentative: apparent omissions may represent gaps caused by the processes of translation and transmission rather than the work of the author; aspects of his presentation may also have been distorted by being removed from their full context, although this is probably a less serious problem.

The identity of the author has generated some controversy.[32] He was also responsible for biographies of Peter the Iberian (lost), the monk Isaiah and the Patriarch Severus of Antioch; the latter was composed before the death of Anastasius so that it focused on Severus' education and early life.[33] These works provide some information about Zachariah himself: he was a native of Gaza, a fellow student of Severus at Alexandria and the Beirut law school; he was present

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tion on secular events, and he provides important evidence for warfare and other misfortunes in Mesopotamia and Osrhoene in the early sixth century, as well as for ecclesiastical matters (vii–ix). The latter books, which cover from the late 530s to 569 (x–xii), only survive in fragmentary form, though Brooks and Hamilton felt able to restore some material from later Syriac histories (*Zachariah* 9).

[29] Chapter heading to ps.-Zach. *HE* 3.1. On the *cubicularius* Eupraxius, a supporter of Severus of Antioch who addressed several letters to him, see *PLRE* II. Eupraxius.

[30] Evagrius *HE* 3.5 (p. 105.16–22, 23–8) and 3.18 preserve material attributed to Zachariah which does not survive in the Syriac epitome.

[31] Michael the Syrian, *Chronique* vol. II, French trans. by J.B. Chabot (Paris, 1901) viii.4, refers to Zachariah for the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, who were wakened after 180 years in 431 at the time of the First Council of Ephesus, in order to honour the Emperor Theodosius and demonstrate the resurrection of the body in opposition to Origenist teaching. The story in fact occurs in pseudo-Zachariah (*HE* 2.1), which indicates that Michael has no value as an independent witness to the original Zachariah.

[32] See Brooks and Hamilton, *Zachariah* 2–3; also Allen, "Zachariah" 471–2.

[33] Zachariah, *Life* of Severus, ed. and trans. M.A. Kugener, *PO* 2 (1903), 4–115. For bibliography on the *Life* of Isaiah and the lost *Life* of Peter, see Grillmeier, *Christ* II.1, 44.

at Severus' baptism and also accompanied him to Emesa to pray before the head of John the Baptist, and then to Jerusalem to see the Cross; though influenced by the famous anti-Chalcedonian bishop of Maiuma, Peter the Iberian, Zachariah failed to embrace the monastic life and in due course practised law at Constantinople as a *scholasticus*. In Palestine he experienced the disputes between supporters of Chalcedon led by the Alexandrian monk Nephalius and anti-synodites led by Peter and Severus. Thereafter Zachariah appears to have changed his Christological stance, since he is attested as bishop of Mitylene at the synod of 536 (by 553 the see was occupied by Palladius). It is probable that Zachariah, maturing into conformity, conveniently switched sides soon after Justin's accession in 518 brought a devout supporter of Chalcedon to the imperial throne.

Zachariah's doctrinal trajectory helps to explain the coverage of his *Ecclesiastical History*. He began with the Council, but does not appear to have attempted more than a very brief explanation of its antecedents: he describes Dioscorus as a peaceable man, a champion, and presents Theodoret, enemy of Cyril and defender of Nestorius, as architect of the Tome of Leo and hence Chalcedon (3.1, pp. 41–2). This approach enabled Zachariah to evade the problematic issue of Eutyches, the monk whose insistence on the unity of Christ's nature extended to denying the full reality of His terrestrial body, so that he lapsed into a docetist position. Eutyches' heresy had been pronounced at Chalcedon, and was accepted even by leading anti-Chalcedonians such as Timothy Aelurus, but it was precisely the forcible ratification of Eutyches as orthodox at Ephesus in 449 which was held against Dioscorus: thus defence of Dioscorus could lead to a rehabilitation of Eutyches, a step which Zachariah preferred to evade. Pseudo-Zachariah by contrast attempted to fill this gap in Zachariah's narrative (2.2–3): Eutyches was renowned for chastity and piety, but, when affirming Christ's single nature in opposition to Nestorian beliefs, propounded an inaccurate doctrine because he was not well instructed; his errors were revealed when confronted by Eusebius of Dorylaeum and Flavian of Constantinople, but these accusers lapsed into Nestorian formulations; the Second Council of Ephesus was convened to review the matter, at which Flavian and Eusebius were ejected whereas Eutyches was received back into communion after presenting a recantation. This interpretation permitted a Monophysite writer to escape the Eutychian dilemma, though it evaded the fact that Eutychius was thereafter still regarded as a

heretic by many Monophysites, for example Timothy Aelurus, in spite of the alleged recantation.

With regard to the end of Zachariah's *History*, it might seem surprising that he did not attempt to narrate the progress of the anti-Chalcedonian cause during Anastasius' reign, but this reflects the caution with which many writers approached discussion of contemporary events (cf. above). Anastasius' own stance changed from acceptance of Zeno's Henoticon as the basis for ecclesiastical peace, a position which Zachariah, like Severus of Antioch, may have felt was too feeble, to support for a more explicit condemnation of Chalcedon. At any rate Zachariah is likely to have been out of sympathy with the current emperor's policy towards the churches at some point in his reign, so that it was wisest to wait before composing further; after Justin's accession, Zachariah abandoned his *History* along with his previous Christological beliefs.

Zachariah presents Chalcedon as a Nestorian venture, an interpretation underlined by Marcian's decision to recall Nestorius from exile; only the righteous judgement of God forestalled this (3.1). The Council was originally summoned to Nicaea, but providence did not allow the assembly of traitors to meet there. At Chalcedon the Nestorians urged that Theodoret be allowed to preside and determine all decisions, and Zachariah does not make clear that this was not agreed—rather he stresses how Theodoret's haughty behaviour at the Council, confident in imperial and papal favour, offended the bishops. Dioscorus is portrayed as enjoying considerable support, with even Eusebius of Dorylaeum in agreement, until the Nestorian party led by John of Germanicia and Theodoret ousted Dioscorus and imposed a two-nature definition. Under compulsion the bishops subscribed, even though shortly before at the Second Council of Ephesus they had chanted condemnations of such formulae. Dioscorus resisted pressure to agree and was banished to Gangra. Then, instead of quoting from the *acta* of Chalcedon, Zachariah inserts a letter written by Dioscorus in exile, in which he expounds his belief in the completeness of Christ's human body and his opposition to phantasiast heresies (3.1; pp. 45–6): this was clearly intended to distance Dioscorus from the charge of accepting Eutychian beliefs, an accusation which the formal proceedings of Chalcedon did not permit to be resolved. Zachariah then returns to the Council to report Dioscorus' challenge to Theodoret's elevated status, various indications of opposition to the proceedings, a further allegation about Theodoret's Nestorianism,

and then an extract from Marcian's address to the bishops when he asserted his desire to expunge all novelty of false doctrine which did not agree with the teachings of the Fathers (3.1): since the introduction of a new creed was a major complaint of the Council's opponents, the emperor is thus made to condemn his own initiative.

Zachariah's treatment of Chalcedon illustrates aspects of his narrative technique. Documentary evidence is important, even for such an apparently unpromising occasion when 'incorrect' decisions were made. Thus Zachariah quotes part of Marcian's speech, and makes the most of the *acta*'s evidence for support for Dioscorus; where such evidence was lacking for an important issue, namely Dioscorus' attitude to Eutychian doctrines, he interpolates a document from elsewhere. Selective reporting sustains the case:[34] the deposition of all the bishops who had presided with Dioscorus at Ephesus in 449 is turned into a closer connection with Dioscorus' position, while Theodoret's Nestorian tendencies are highlighted to blacken the whole Council.

Thereafter Zachariah's narrative presents a predictable catalogue of heroes and villains. Apart from the doughty Dioscorus, his anti-synodite successors at Alexandria, Timothy Aelurus and Peter Mongus (477–89), are favourably presented. Timothy was a reasonable, mild and peaceful man, a popular bishop who was keen to welcome his opponents back into the orthodox fold, and he even provided an allowance for the ousted Chalcedonian bishop, Timothy Salophaciolus (460–82); he had no part in the murder of his Chalcedonian rival Proterius in 457, and on the contrary his own arrest at the baptismal font and expulsion in 460 occasioned massive slaughter (*HE* 5.1, 4; 4.9). There is a long exposition of Timothy's opposition to Eutychianists (4.12; cf. 5.4), recalling the emphasis on Dioscorus'

[34] Allen, "Zachariah" 484–5; Ead., *Evagrius Scholasticus, the Church Historian* (Louvain, 1981), 113–18, suggests that Zachariah may have appended an epitome of the Council's proceedings to his account of Marcian's reign, an antecedent to the epitome which Evagrius placed at the end of his second book. The only evidence for this is the Table of Contents to ps.-Zach. iii, which, after listing the contents of the 12 extant chapters, states that "The thirteenth book tells us about the accession of Marcian, and about the bishops who came to Chalcedon and what took place in the council until the public address of the king to the bishops." But Brooks (*CSCO* 41, 101 n. 3) plausibly interpreted this as a duplicate for the description of the first chapter of book three. The evidence of Michael the Syrian *HE* 8.10 (vol. II pp. 37–69), which Allen cites in support of her argument, in fact undermines her case (cf. n. 64 below).

rejection of the heretic's views (3.1). Peter Mongus was also keen to unify the Alexandrians in a single communion, and was so conciliatory that hard-line anti-Chalcedonians deserted him (5.7, 9; 6.1–4).

Opponents of these devout bishops are harshly portrayed. Juvenal of Jerusalem is compared to Pilate for his obstinacy in refusing to retract his adherence to the Council, his reinstatement was only accomplished after the deaths of numerous martyrs whose blood performed miracles, and he recognized his error by meekly accepting a humiliating rebuke from a pious monk (3.3, 6–8). Proterius of Alexandria was worse: like Judas he betrayed his master, and like Absalom his father, he greedily punished those who rejected his authority with banishment and confiscations, and used bribery to secure physical support from Roman soldiers (3.2). After Marcian's death in 457 there was rioting in Alexandria between the populace, who supported Timothy Aelurus, and Roman soldiers whose violence alone kept Proterius in post; the bloodshed was so bad that Dionysius, the count of Egypt, released Timothy from custody in order to restore calm. Timothy's popularity was demonstrated by the crowds which flocked to him for baptism, in contrast to the meagre five who were brought to Proterius. Proterius became angered that the Roman soldiers were not killing enough of his enemies in return for the money he was paying, but his complaints provoked a soldier to kill him; his corpse was dumped at the Tetrapylon, from where the people dragged it to the Hippodrome and burnt it (4.1–2). Evagrius (2.8) states that Zachariah relied for his account on a letter from Timothy to the Emperor Leo; there is no reference to the document in pseudo-Zachariah.[35] Proterius' successor, Timothy Salophaciolus, was much milder and declined to persecute his opponents, but he is criticized for seeking popularity, and being soft in manners and feeble in actions (4.10). A significant fault was a selfish concern for the primacy of his see, which is also held against successive patriarchs of Constantinople, Anatolius, Gennadius and Acacius (4.5, 10; 5.1).

As is standard practice for church historians, a key aspect of Zachariah's engaged narrative is the deployment of documents, many of which are quoted *in extenso* even in the surviving epitome; in addition Evagrius (2.10) refers to a letter of Amphilocius of Side which

[35] Allen, "Zachariah" 476, assumes that Zachariah's original narrative was much more detailed than that preserved in pseudo-Zachariah, but this is not entailed by Evagrius' reference.

was incorporated in Zachariah's work but does not now survive.[36] These texts served the same function as the assemblage of miracles in John Rufus' *Plerophories*, confirmation for the correctness of the writer's position and elucidation of particular points. Timothy's reasonable and conciliatory nature is demonstrated in his letter to Emperor Leo, with its emphasis on adherence to Nicaea and reluctance to publicize or condemn inappropriate communications from the Pope (4.6). By contrast Anatolius' letter to Leo reveals his jealous hostility to Timothy, which determined the response to Leo's encyclical enquiry to bishops about Chalcedon and Timothy's ordination (4.8). By far the longest document quoted is Timothy's exposition against Eutychianists (4.12), which shows the importance of this issue. Imperial attempts to reunite the Church through rejection of Chalcedon are highlighted: Basiliscus' Encyclical (475) is presented, as well as its enthusiastic reception (5.2–3), and Zeno's Henoticon (482), a less explicit document, is introduced through the anti-Chalcedonian spin with which Peter Mongus published it to the people of Alexandria (5.7–8); on the other hand, Basiliscus' Counter-Encyclical is mentioned but was probably not cited (5.5). The Counter-Encyclical produced dishonesty, as in the Asian bishops' retraction of their previous support for the Encyclical,[37] or schism, as demonstrated by Martyrius of Jerusalem's refusal to abandon the Encyclical in an address which championed the orthodox trinity of Nicaea, Constantinople and Ephesus, and assimilated Chalcedon to the Arian councils of Rimini and Serdica (5.6). The unity created by the Henoticon is stressed by the inclusion of exchanges of synodical letters (5.10–12; 6.5–6), even when it is acknowledged that the correspondence between Peter Mongus and Fravitta of Constantinople was nullified by the latter's speedy death and the accession of the 'Nestorian' Euphemius (6.4).

Zachariah's youthful connection with Severus of Antioch determined the slant of his narrative as anti-Chalcedonian; he would not, however, appear to have been an extremist, which might explain his change of allegiance in later life. One indication is his condemnation of Eutychian views: although Zachariah had evaded consideration of

[36] Ps.-Zach. *HE* 4.7 preserves the gist of the letter, and it is possible that Evagrius has misrepresented, or misremembered, how much was in Zachariah.

[37] Evagrius (*HE* 3.9) demonstrates that Zachariah had quoted the Asian bishops' petition, although this is not preserved in pseudo-Zachariah; it is possible that the Syriac epitomator also omitted the Counter-Encyclical as uncongenial.

Eutyches himself, his extreme Monophysite opinions were an important issue. Paul the monk, who was responsible for drafting the anti-Chalcedonian Encyclical of Basiliscus, is praised for demonstrating to Acacius of Constantinople the inherent identity of the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches (5.1), while in Peter the Fuller's Encyclical it is claimed that Cyril of Alexandria's 12 Anathemas exposed the false doctrines of Eutyches as well as Nestorius (5.10).[38] Theodosius, the anti-Chalcedonian bishop of Jerusalem, condemned Eutychians as well as Nestorians (3.9). Another sign of his moderation is the praise for acts of conciliation by his heroes, Timothy Aelurus and Peter Mongus (4.12; 6.1–4). He was aware that episcopal actions were often determined by selfish motives rather than questions of doctrine or principle, a tendency which he identified in supporters of Chalcedon, especially in Patriarchs of Constantinople whose reluctance to abandon the Council could be connected with the issue of the status of their see.

Emperors, unfortunately, were likely to be influenced by these wily prelates, so that Basiliscus countermanded his Encyclical just when it appeared to be uniting the eastern churches (5.2–5). Miracles are not central to Zachariah's account, with the cure of the blind Samaritan (3.6) as a rare example. Documents, rather, are the key items of proof, a reflection perhaps of his legal training, and these are often quoted *in extenso*. But, in an age when forgery was rife, Zachariah was prepared to distort the documentary testimony, as with his use of Dioscorus' letter on Eutychian beliefs in the context of Chalcedon (3.1), or the strong anti-Chalcedonian spin given to Zeno's Henoticon (5.7–8), whose impact was exaggerated (6.4–6). Secular events scarcely obtrude into this narrative, except where they have a bearing on Christological debate, as with the usurpation of Basiliscus; since Pseudo-Zachariah was interested in recording secular affairs, and so would have extracted such information from his source, it is likely that Zachariah had produced a history which focused exclusively on the progress of the doctrinal debate.[39]

[38] Both Timothy Aelurus and Severus of Antioch wrote against Eutyches: Grillmeier, *Christ* II.1, 64.

[39] This is also suggested by the material which Evagrius could borrow from Zachariah: he had to turn to other sources, primarily Eustathius of Epiphania, for secular history.

Theodore Lector

Analysis of Theodore presents many similar problems to Zachariah. Theodore was a devout supporter of Chalcedon who accompanied Macedonius, patriarch of Constantinople, into exile at Euchaïta after his deposition at Emperor Anastasius' instigation in 511. It was there that he produced a complete history of the Church: the first part reproduced Eusebius and Gelasius; the continuation, which is commonly known as the *Historia tripartita*, was provided by an amalgamation of the works of Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret; this was continued by Theodore's own *Ecclesiastical History*, which extended down to the death of Anastasius (518).[40] We do not possess a text, or even an epitome, of Theodore; rather we have extracts drawn from an epitome produced in the early seventh century, and numerous testimonia from later texts which relied on this epitome, most importantly the *Chronographia* of Theophanes.[41] Fortunately, the complex task of gathering Theodore's remnants has been ably carried out by Hansen, and some features of his work can be identified.[42]

Theodore's *History* followed on from Socrates' account, starting with the patriarchy of Proclus of Constantinople (434–47). The first surviving extract concerns Pulcheria and her interest in proper administration, especially where Jewish misbehaviour was involved (336).[43] Her reputation was important for Theodore: he acknowledged that there were rumours of incest with Theodosius but dismissed these as Nestorian fabrications, invented because of her hostility to Nestorius (340); Monophysite sources exploited the charge of sexual impropriety, but preserved the reputation of Theodosius by introducing Marcian as Pulcheria's partner.[44] Most importantly, whereas Theodosius

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[40] Theodoros Anagnostes, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. G.C. Hansen, *GCS* (Berlin, 1971). P. Nautin, "Théodore Lecteur et sa 'Réunion de différentes histoires' de l'église", *REB* 52 (1994), 213–24, suggests that the title *Historia tripartita* should be applied to Theodore's combined works of ecclesiastical historiography, which did indeed fall into three parts.

[41] Theophanes often reproduces the abbreviated Theodore very closely, but he also tended to introduce adjectives and adverbs to underline his own doctrinal views: see C. Mango and R. Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, A.D. 284–813* (Oxford, 1997), 219 n. 4.

[42] For a clear discussion of this issue, see the introduction to Hansen, *Theodoros*.

[43] These numbers refer to the sections in Hansen's reconstructions of the text.

[44] If Theodore was aware of Monophysite use of these stories, as for example in the *Life of Dioscorus* (see above), he was discrediting their propaganda by associating the slanders with Nestorians. Theodore remarks that the rumours about Pulcheria

is depicted as malleable and susceptible to the influence of the evil Chrysaphius, who persuaded him to depose Flavian of Constantinople over the issue of disciplining Eutyches (346, 350), Pulcheria knew her brother's fault and tried to shame him into attending more closely to affairs of state (352). The pious Pulcheria was generous to the poor, and financed the construction of important churches (363).

On doctrinal matters, Theodore reports the vindication of Theodore of Mopsuestia's orthodoxy, which was still being challenged in Theodore's own lifetime by Philoxenus of Mabbug and Severus of Antioch, two of his *bêtes noires*. The absence of bishops from the diocese of Oriens at Ephesus in 449 is noted, which undermined its pretentions to being a proper synod, as is its hostility to the 150 holy fathers of Constantinople (347–8), the second Council of 381 which anti-Chalcedonians claimed to recognize. Dioscorus, architect of the Second Council of Ephesus, is presented as hostile to the memory of the great Cyril, a wild man whose supporters upheld the views of Eutyches (342, 362). Timothy Aelurus stands out as a villain: his ambitions were supported by Eutyches' followers as well as Dioscorus, he was responsible for Proterius' death, and secured support for his own elevation by using sorcery to deceive the Egyptian monks (368–9). In spite of these misdeeds, the emperor Leo proceeded against him properly, leaving the decision about him to the bishops (371–3). In exile at Gangra Timothy's misbehaviour led the local bishop to ask for his relocation (380); after being recalled by Basiliscus, Timothy injured his foot during a procession in Constantinople and had to withdraw in shame (404); on returning to Alexandria his distasteful gloating over his enemies, "Yes, I have indeed feasted on them!" contrasts with the modesty of Timothy Salophaciolus, who was protected by the love which everyone bore him (409).[45] Gennadius of Constantinople, who urged Leo to act against Timothy, is favourably portrayed: he performed good deeds and miracles (381–4), and his patriarchate was graced by various contemporary saints (385–7). A vision guaranteed that the Church would be safe in his hands (396); this implied that there were prob-

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were reported to the *magister* Paulinus, who was involved in one version of the sexual scandals in the palace of Theodosius (as lover of Eudocia: Malalas 356.17–357.19; cf. n. 23 above), which might suggest that he knew some of the stories.

[45] For the good reputation of Salophaciolus, cf. 379. Timothy Aelurus' other rival as bishop of Alexandria, Proterius, is also shown in a good light in the extract where he petitions Marcian to restore food supplies to Alexandria (362).

lems with his successor Acacius, who is said to have been ready to accept Basiliscus' heretical actions until aroused by popular outrage (406). Theodore noted that Gennadius was accused by some of Nestorianism, but that he retaliated by inscribing the Theotokos in the diptychs (395).

Peter the Fuller at Antioch (A.D. 469–71, 475–7, 484–9) and Peter Mongus at Alexandria (A.D. 477–89) were heirs to Timothy Aelurus in their ambition, disruption, misdeeds, and tyrannical behaviour; at Alexandria John Talaia, the rival patriarch (A.D. 482), a holy man who fought for truth, rejected the pleas of the bishops, clergy, monks and people to oppose Peter Mongus' return;[46] Peter the Fuller's changes to the Trisaghion, the introduction of 'Who was crucified for us', caused particular uproar, and the opposition even embraced Acacius who was regarded as a sympathizer (390–2, 410, 416–17, 422–30). At Constantinople, the unsatisfactory Acacius, who tolerated violence and anathematized Pope Felix (434), was succeeded, after the brief interlude of Fravitta, by the doughty Euphemius, who promptly removed Peter Mongus from the diptychs and restored Felix; his zeal for orthodoxy led him to expel the silentiary Anastasius, the future emperor, from the church as a Eutychianist and to threaten him with tonsure (440–2).

Anastasius is the key imperial figure for Theodore, because of his opposition to Chalcedon and expulsion of Macedonius; his unsuitable religious views are underlined by the rejoicing of Manichees and Arians at his accession (448). At Constantinople Patriarch Euphemius (A.D. 490–6), though supported by the people, was subject to diverse plotting, which ultimately led to his expulsion. His successor Macedonius (A.D. 496–511) was persuaded by Anastasius to subscribe to the Henoticon, but behaved respectfully towards the deposed Euphemius and provided him with funds (455–7); his eagerness for ecclesiastical union stopped short of acquiescing in persecution, and he even forgave a failed assassin (459, 471). Only the Persian War distracted Anastasius from his campaign against the Church and Macedonius, but after its end he pressured Flavian of Antioch into accepting the Henoticon and anathematizing various theologians associated with the Antiochene Christological tradition; the 'Manichee-minded' Xenaïas, i.e. Philoxenus of Mabbug, was

[46] This continues the reversal of the presentation of Alexandrian bishops in Zachariah.

behind this initiative, but Flavian rejected orders to anathematize Chalcedon (466, 470, 472–3).

Attention then turns to the drama of Macedonius. He was subjected to increasing pressure by Anastasius, who had received the promise of a substantial bribe from the anti-Chalcedonian patriarch of Alexandria, John of Nikiu, to make Macedonius reject the Council; Macedonius enjoyed enthusiastic popular support, and even though he was tricked into an apparent repudiation of Chalcedon he quickly clarified his views and withstood all other pressure and false accusations; his deposition in 511 was greatly mourned by the empress Ariadne and some senators. His successor Timothy (A.D. 511–18), whose nicknames of Dirty Glutton and Stallion reflected his activities, was prepared to communicate with enemies of the synod (474, 477–96). In all this the evil genius Anastasius plots against defenders of Chalcedon and favours its opponents, however unsavoury they might be. His behaviour as ruler is in contrast to that of Theodoric the Goth, who, though an Arian heretic, restored ecclesiastical order at Rome and punished an attendant who attempted to curry favour by joining the Arians (462–3), and of the Arab phylarch Alamundarus, who cunningly refuted the attempts of Severus of Antioch to make him join the anti-synodites (513). Even in death Macedonius maintained his opposition to Anastasius: his corpse miraculously made the sign of the Cross, and he appeared in a vision to one of his companions, Theodore, presumably the author of the *History*, to tell him to announce to the emperor that he would continue to beseech God until Anastasius came to stand judgement alongside him (515). As a sign of divine disfavour for those who rejected Chalcedon, the population of Alexandria was stricken by demons and began to howl (516).

The leading characters in Theodore's account are painted black or white, and his particular tirade against Anastasius is reinforced by anti-Arian miracles: an Arian called Olympius who blasphemed in the Helenianae baths perished on the spot, an incident commemorated by a picture in the baths; the chief steward Eutychianus was bribed by Arians to remove it, but promptly wasted away (465).[47]

[47] This incident was probably recorded by Theodore at very considerable length, since John of Damascus (*de imaginibus or.* 3; printed in Hansen, *Theodoros* 131–3) preserves a version, attributed to Theodore, which extends to 75 lines as opposed to the five lines of the epitome. Discussion in Mango and Scott, *Theophanes* 219 n. 4.

When the Arian bishop Barbas pronounced a heretical formula at a baptism, the water in the font disappeared (475). Although the Arian Vandals were persecuting the orthodox in Africa (431), it was the accusations against Anastasius which made Arians a live issue again in eastern ecclesiastical historiography. The historical connection is clear in a comment which Theodore introduced into his amalgam of Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret: in the fourth century Arians protested against the involvement of Pope Julius in eastern affairs, when he supported Athanasius of Alexandria and others, just as contemporary opponents of Chalcedon protested against Pope Leo (63).[48] Anastasius' determination to preserve communion with anti-Chalcedonians in the east had led to the Acacian schism with the west, whereas Theodore praises the Pope's historical role as defender of orthodoxy. Manichaean was another insult to be levelled at Anastasius—like Philoxenus of Mabbug he is described as 'Manichee-minded' (511): he brought in from Cyzicus a Syro-Persian Manichee painter who, at the emperor's injunction, painted strange images, very different from those in churches, in the Helenianae palace and the church of Stephen; the result was a popular riot (467).

Theodore's close connection with Macedonius ensured that he was a highly committed writer; his prejudices are predictable, and clearly stated. His world view is simple. Good emperors are influenced by orthodox clergy, though when necessary they will also take the initiative in defending orthodoxy (360; 372). Control of the Church is the responsibility of the Church, and emperors should not intervene. Universal communion is desirable, but this must be achieved through persuasion and argument rather than persecution and violence. Chalcedonians are regularly shown as enjoying popular support, though they will retire to avoid violence, and performing good deeds and miracles (381–3; 417). Other testimony in favour of orthodoxy was provided by the ecclesiastical historian's traditional weapon, documents: although these are not quoted in the surviving extracts, the epitomator noted that Theodore had recorded Theodosius II's instructions about the Second Council of Ephesus, the Tome of Leo, a

[48] Other possible anti-Arian notices are the reference to the heretic Aspar's opposition to Patriarch Gennadius' plans to act against Timothy Aelurus (378; also perhaps Aspar's treachery, 399), and Calandion of Antioch's restoration of the relics of his predecessor Eustathius (435), who had died in Macedonia after being exiled by the Arian Valens (174). In neither case, however, is the Arian connection explicit in the existing epitome.

digest of episcopal responses to the emperor Leo's enquiry about Chalcedon and Timothy Aelurus, and letters to Zeno and Acacius which described the Arian atrocities in Africa (346, 359, 373, 431). In each case important points were being made: imperial involvement in the disgrace of Dioscorus' doings at Ephesus, the crucial exposition of Chalcedonian orthodoxy and its overwhelming ratification by eastern bishops, Arian misdeeds.

Theodore's focus throughout is on Church affairs and when secular material appears it has a clear link with ecclesiastical business: the qualities of Pulcheria, the patroness of Chalcedon (336, 352); revolts against the two emperors least favourable to Chalcedon, namely Zeno and Anastasius (401–14, 419–20, 437–8, 449–50, 469, 485, 509–11); imperial attempts to remove the Vandals from Africa (399); the Persian War of Anastasius, which disrupted his actions against supporters of Chalcedon (466); three individual notices from the end of the *History* (512–14). Even if the original text of Theodore has been very severely abridged, the bias towards ecclesiastical material was probably always there: at least Theophanes had to turn to Eustathius of Epiphania for secular material to supplement Theodore, just as Evagrius did when using Zachariah.

Liberatus

Another interesting Chalcedonian interpretation of doctrinal history is presented in the *Breviarium causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum* of Liberatus. He was an archdeacon at Carthage who undertook a mission to Rome in 535, shortly after the Justinianic reconquest of North Africa. Like most African clergy he was a determined opponent of Justinian's Three Chapters initiative in 544, when the emperor attempted to unify eastern Christendom through condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Ibas of Edessa, three leading Antiochene theologians of the fifth century who were hostile to Cyril of Alexandria. In 551 he accompanied his bishop Reparatus to Constantinople for the discussions which preceded the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553; Reparatus was exiled to Euchaïta before the Council, and after its conclusion Liberatus probably joined him there, the place where Theodore Lector had composed his *History* during the exile of Macedonius; he only returned home after Reparatus'

death in 563. Not surprisingly, as with Theodore, Liberatus' career determined his specific approach to Chalcedon.

Liberatus' account is important,[49] since it represents the third major doctrinal standpoint within the Empire, that of the Latin-speaking Church of the West, and as such it is a counterpart to the different eastern perspectives of Zachariah and Theodore; its interpretation of eastern disputes and presentation of imperial action has implications for the construction of the divide between eastern and western Churches. He had access to Cassiodorus' Latin translation of Theodore Lector's amalgamation of the fifth-century church historians, a Latin translation of the *acta* of Chalcedon which he had recently acquired at Alexandria (12), various letters, as well as another, unidentified ecclesiastical history in Greek which he had also obtained at Alexandria (1).[50] He also claimed to have received information from reputable men (1, p. 99.3), so that his approach to the collection of material was thoroughly historical. The work had a limited scope and specific purpose, to use his own knowledge of eastern disputes to inform western clergy about the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies (1). This was essential background to the current Three Chapters dispute,[51] and this contemporary agenda explains many of Liberatus' attitudes. Recent events did not need to be rehearsed, and Liberatus treats these selectively; he notes the Monophysite schism over the corruptibility of Christ, which provoked much violence at Alexandria down to the present (19–20), and highlights the disreputable background to the Three Chapters controversy (23). In each case the implication is that the eastern Church is not to be trusted.

Emperors are treated with suspicion. Theodosius II gave an unsatisfactory response to Pope Leo's appeal against the decisions of the Second Council of Ephesus: "This was the decision on Flavian of Theodosius, son of the emperor Arcadius, grandson of the emperor

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[49] The significance of Liberatus was noticed by Averil Cameron, "Byzantine Africa—the Literary Evidence", *University of Michigan, Excavations at Carthage* 2, 1982, 29–61, at 28. The only recent discussion is in E. Schwartz's introduction to his edition of the text in *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* II.v, New York, 1967 (Berlin/Leipzig, 1937), pp. XVI–XVIIII.

[50] This is often stated to be Zachariah Rhetor (e.g. F.X. Murphy in *The New Catholic Encyclopaedia* 8. 712), but there is nothing in the text of Liberatus to substantiate this conjecture and their respective approaches to events are so different that it is difficult to see what use Liberatus might have made of Zachariah.

[51] Cameron, "Africa" 47.

Theodosius the elder; during his years all these disturbances are known to have occurred" (12; p. 119.27–9). The solemnity conveyed by the imperial genealogy indicates Liberatus' disapproval. Zeno's interventions in Church affairs were unhelpful, though some blame belonged to Patriarch Acacius and the episcopal rivalry which he fostered, for example by slandering John Talaia at Alexandria; Zeno's Henoticon was the product of this rivalry (17). By contrast Leo, who responded to appeals about Chalcedon and Timothy Aelurus by seeking advice from bishops throughout the Empire, is a model of correct conduct (15). Anastasius is also treated favourably, as a ruler who promoted union, and dismissed bishops only when this failed (18).[52]

Conflicts between Popes and Emperors reveal the failings of the latter. Marcian's involvement at Chalcedon is portrayed positively, except for the issue of Canon 28 and the status of Constantinople. This matter was decided in the absence of the magistrates, senators and papal legates, but the legates' subsequent objection was not accepted; as a result the apostolic see "continues to the present" to deny what was ratified by the synod, though this is upheld by the emperor (13; p. 123.8–18). In the Acacian schism Acacius pleaded the need to obey the imperial command to communicate with Peter Mongus in Alexandria, but Pope Simplicius countered by demanding adherence to Chalcedon and Leo's Tome rather than to an imperial edict (17). Justinian showed the proper attitude for an emperor by consulting the Pope about the Theopaschite issue in the 530s (19; p. 134.24–9), but the misfortunes of the Three Chapters dispute were the product of the opposite behaviour: the empress Theodora's scheming and Vigilius' ambitions conspired against Pope Silverius and thwarted Justinian's desire to hold a proper investigation. Jealous rivalry at court between the papal *apocrisarius* Pelagius and Justinian's adviser Theodore of Caesarea led to the deceitful proposal that universal approval for Chalcedon could be secured through condemnation of the Three Chapters; Justinian was taken in and readily agreed. Liberatus declined to record how bishops were forced to accept Justinian's Three Chapters Edict: it was all the fault of Pelagius and Theodore, who deserved to be burnt alive (24;

[52] In view of Anastasius' attitude to Chalcedon and the Papacy, this presentation might seem surprising; Anastasius' clashes with successive patriarchs of Constantinople, whom Liberatus disliked for reasons of doctrine as well as church politics, probably outweighed other factors.

p. 141.7–11)! The overall message is that emperors should not meddle in Church affairs, since they often received biased advice whose implementation might be disastrous.

Episcopal rivalry is a regular source of trouble. Liberatus shows no liking for bishops of Constantinople after the Council of Chalcedon,[53] a reflection of his attitude towards this upstart see: the single exception is the short-lived Fravitta, who would only accept ordination with papal consent (17). Macedonius was expelled for falsifying the text of the New Testament,[54] and banished as a Nestorian (19). At Alexandria the pro-Chalcedonian Timothy Salophaciolus, who was so mild that even his supporters complained of his leniency towards heretics (16), and John Talaia meet with approval; Liberatus, though, indirectly revealed the balance of popular support in the city when demonstrating Timothy's popularity, since the people chanted, "Even if we do not communicate with you, we love you." (16). The only Pope to be criticized is Vigilius, but he succumbed to imperial pressure: apart from his scheming against Silverius, he wrote to "heretics" with a condemnation of dyophysite Christology, but he received his reward "since everyone knows the manner of his death", a reference to *Proverbs* 1.31. Popes had a duty to provide leadership to the universal Church, as Agapetus demonstrated when he visited Constantinople in 536, resisted Theodora's bribery, and achieved the removal of the heretical Patriarch Anthimus (19–21).

The anti-Chalcedonian succession at Alexandria naturally comes in for criticism, and even the great Cyril is not spared. His manoeuvrings against Nestorius and behaviour at the First Council of Ephesus are described in unfavourable terms; John of Antioch's anathema against him as a troublemaker is quoted and its acceptance by Theodosius II noted (4–6). Cyril had to make doctrinal concessions under imperial pressure, and a letter is quoted to demonstrate his acceptance of two-nature Christology and agreement with the Tome of Leo, "to disprove the boastful Alexandrians". Finally he had to explain his Twelve Chapters when challenged by Theodoret (8–9). Whereas Monophysites tended to sidestep Cyril's doctrinal pronouncements in the 430s, or at least argue that they must be interpreted in the light of earlier writings, Liberatus highlighted Cyril's moves

[53] Thus Flavian, the opponent of Eutyches and victim of Dioscorus, is treated favourably (11).

[54] *1 Timothy* 3.16, altering *hos* 'who' into the abbreviation for *theos* 'God'.

to reach an accommodation with his Antiochene opponents. Dioscorus and his ally Eutyches are harshly criticized for their violence at Ephesus in 449, while at Chalcedon Dioscorus' intransigence is stressed through the narration of the attempts by different bishops to summon him to judgement. Timothy Aelurus prepared to poison himself since he feared that the emperor Zeno, on return from exile in 476, would support Chalcedon: this explained Timothy's ability to predict the day of his death (16). Peter Mongus emerges as an unpleasant and duplicitous individual, who relocated the corpse of Timothy Salophaciolus and expelled the orthodox (17).

Dioscorus and Eutyches are also attacked indirectly through Liberatus' criticism of followers of Apollinaris, since they were accused of subscribing to this heresy. Apollinaris was a safe target who served a dual purpose, since the attacks legitimated the Antiochene teachers Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, two of his main enemies in the company of the great Cappadocians, Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil of Caesarea (3). The reputations of Diodore and Theodore had also been damaged by poor translations into Syriac, Armenian and Persian, which led Armenian followers of Apollinaris to attack Theodore; Nestorians, too, conflated their heresiarch's teachings with these recognized authorities, thus contributing to their fall from favour (10). Liberatus, though, indulges in selective emphasis on his own account: the authenticity of a work against Theodore attributed to Cyril is impugned, so that Cyril is made to appear less hostile to the Antiochene theological tradition than Monophysites believed (10). This process of redefinition is continued in Liberatus' treatment of Chalcedon,[55] where he stresses that the Council upheld the concurrence between Leo's Tome and Cyril's teachings, and that the Chalcedonian Creed was consistent with both. Attention is also drawn to the Council's endorsement of the individuals at the centre of the Three Chapters controversy (13), so that attacks on them challenged Chalcedon's authority.

Liberatus produced his short history to argue a specific case to a western ecclesiastical audience, and its preservation in the *Collectio*

[55] Liberatus states that he had recently acquired at Alexandria a copy of the *acta* translated into Latin; he preserves the correct order of the second and third sessions (issues of orthodoxy, followed by the deposition of Dioscorus), whereas all extant Greek versions of the *acta* reverse the sequence to enhance the thematic coherence of discussions (Second Ephesus and Dioscorus, followed by doctrine, with various specific questions at the end).

Sangermanniensis, a Chalcedonian miscellany, indicates that this is how the text was received.[56] Liberatus does not deploy miracles to support his argument, but sometimes uses the other standard proof of ecclesiastical historians, namely documents: the *acta* of Chalcedon are summarized, and Zeno's Henoticon is quoted; on the other hand, the Acacian schism, and the initiatives of Justinian's reign are not illustrated by specific texts. Selection of material and careful emphasis were key mechanisms for promoting his views. For Liberatus the Church had declined into disputes and dissensions: the individuals targeted in the Three Chapters dispute had been cleared as orthodox on various occasions in the fifth century, but were again being challenged; Pope Vigilius had betrayed the role of the Papacy and no eastern see had the reputation to replace it. The *Breviarium* offered various models for proper relations in the ecclesiastical sphere, and for dealings between Church and Emperor, as well as warnings of what should be avoided.

The Late Sixth Century: John of Ephesus and Evagrius

A full treatment of the historical responses to Chalcedon and its doctrinal ramifications would require investigation of propagandist collections of documents, the emerging genre of *florilegia*, catalogues of heresies, and collections of definitions and of questions and answers;[57] sixth-century hagiography, in particular the *Lives* of Palestininian holy men by Cyril of Scythopolis,[58] and Eustratius' *Life* of Patriarch Eutychius, which recounts the 553 Council of Constantinople through

[56] The *Collectio Sangermanniensis* begins with a version of the Codex Encyclicus of Emperor Leo (the collection of positive responses to his consultation of bishops about Chalcedon), translated into Latin by Epiphanius; then Liberatus' narrative; finally a further collection of letters and documents which uphold the orthodoxy of Theodore of Mopsuestia (though the letters of John Chrysostom and Gregory Nazianzus were not addressed to this Theodore), reproaches for the argumentative behaviour of Cyril of Alexandria, a Creed attributed to Cyril which contradicted the Monophysite interpretation of the Trisaghion by stating the Christ (not God) suffered in the flesh, and testimonia against Arians and Eutychianists which served to defend Theodoret.

[57] For a brief overview of works relevant to such a broad project, see Grillmeier, *Christ* II.1, 22–89, which is far beyond the compass of this chapter.

[58] For illuminating discussion, see C.J. Stallman-Pacitti, *Cyril of Scythopolis: a study in hagiography as apology* (Brookline, Massachusetts, 1990), especially ch. 3–4.

the eyes of one of its main actors, would also be relevant.[59] Although important and interesting, this would distract the investigation too far from its historiographical focus. One diversion which should be made, however, is to the Syriac *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, who wrote at or near Constantinople and had links with secular and ecclesiastical leaders. Although John's audience was probably Syriac monks, the significant Greek linguistic influences in the *History* suggest that he may have ben bilingual.[60] The first two parts of this work, which ran from Julius Caesar (mid-first century B.C.) to the early years of Justin II (*circa* 568/9), are lost with the exception of a few fragments and excerpts. Thus it is not possible to make precise deductions about John's narrative of the Chalcedonian dispute: later Syriac writers who used John will have introduced their own distortions, and it is also difficult to identify how John's account differed from that of Zachariah. The problem is such that it has even been suggested that John did not provide a very full account of Church history in the late fifth century.[61]

Most of Part Three of the *History* survives.[62] This describes the disputes within the Monophysite community in the 560s and 570s, and the coercion applied by Justin II in his attempts to secure ecclesiastical union. John's intention was to demonstrate that his Church had preserved orthodoxy, in spite of all challenges: dissidents within the ranks might be brought into line through discussions, whereas Chalcedonians, always eager to seduce the faithful, were attached to other heretics, Jews and pagans. John was interested in the Constantinopolitan patriarchy, since pressure on Monophysites was directed from there, and in the imperial palace since patriarchs had to persuade emperors to enforce their wishes. As a result John provides some information on court politics, which sometimes included actions in the provinces, such as the arrest of al-Mundhir after his quarrel with Maurice over military matters (3.40–1), or the pagan sex scandals in the patriarchy of Antioch (3.27–31). In the last book John

[59] Discussion in Averil Cameron, "Models of the Past in the late Sixth Century: The Life of the Patriarch Eutychius", in G. Clarke (ed.) *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Australian National University Press, 1990), 205–23; reprinted in Averil Cameron, *Changing Cultures in Early Byzantium* (Variorum, Aldershot, 1996) II.

[60] Van Ginkel, *John* 42, 95–6.

[61] Van Ginkel, *John* 62, 67.

[62] *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and Latin trans. by E.W. Brooks, CSCO 106, *Scr. Syri* 55 (Louvain, 1936). For discussion of John as a writer, see van Ginkel, *John*.

narrates the Persian War which began in 572, with considerable detail on events such as the siege of Dara in 573 (6.3–4), and some Balkan incidents down almost to the author's death in about 589.[63] Although the start of the first book of Part Three is lost, it is likely that John was persuaded to add this continuation to his *History* by the eschatological significance which he attached to contemporary ecclesiastical disputes (1.3–5). The secular narrative in book VI is introduced as germane to ecclesiastical history precisely because wars and destruction were clear signs of the end (6.1); both these introductory sections quote the warning of *Matthew* 24.33.

John's narrative is often confused, and sometimes repetitive, whether because of the difficult conditions in which John had to work during the Chalcedonian pressure of the 570s or because he was now elderly. It is, however, an important complement to the work of Evagrius, since John records the details of Monophysite controversies which his Chalcedonian contemporary ignored and provides a hostile interpretation of various events in which Evagrius' employer, Patriarch Gregory of Antioch, was involved. For John, God was always closely involved in human affairs, rewarding the good and, more often, punishing the wicked, for example the patriarchs John Scholasticus and Eutychius who persuaded emperors to permit persecutions (2.25–7, 30, 38–9). Doctrinal disagreements are important, but the debate is more often presented through partisan slogans than rational argument or documents. John's Church is a much more lively but also faction-ridden community than appears in Evagrius' narrative, but it is only a part of the Universal Church: the disputes which inspired John were the internal struggles to control the beliefs of the Monophysite communities, no longer the attempt to lead the whole Christian faith.

Among later Syriac writers, Michael the Syrian stands out for the substantial epitome of proceedings at Chalcedon which he incorporated in his *Chronicle* (8.10, vol. II, pp. 37–69). Allen's argument that this epitome was derived from Zachariah does not withstand scrutiny:[64] Michael begins with a section explicitly attributed to Zachariah (8.10.1, pp. 37–8), but the remainder diverges from Zachariah's presentation (e.g. Dioscorus' letter to Secundinus, prominent in Zachariah

[63] Discussion in Michael Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and his Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Balkan and Persian Warfare* (Oxford, 1988), 245–8.

[64] Allen, "Zachariah" 485; Ead., *Evagrius* 116.

3.1, is not mentioned); Michael's next chapter (8.11) reproduces Rufus' *Plerophories*, after which he signals his return to Zachariah (8.12, p. 88). This epitome, though, was probably derived from an early author and is of interest as an example of how a Monophysite might, through selective citation of texts, present the Council. Proceedings open with a sequence of disputes, first about the status of Dioscorus and Theodoret and then about the accuracy of records from Second Ephesus and the anti-Eutychian gathering at Constantinople; quotations from these *acta* underline the heresy of two-nature Christology, which the Chalcedonian bishops could only be made to accept under duress. Dioscorus' excuses for his refusal to attend for judgement, that he was in detention, are reported without the contradictions contained in the official *acta*. The creation of a new Creed was pushed most energetically by the papal representatives and imperial commissioners, whereas the bishops were inclined to regard this as unnecessary; the error of adding to the faith of Nicaea is underlined in a quotation from a letter by Athanasius of Alexandria. Michael's summary is intended to damage the collective authority of the Council and defend Dioscorus; the Chalcedonian bishops are shown as reluctant time-servers.

The single most important narrative of Chalcedon and its aftermath is provided by Evagrius *scholasticus*. His family came from Epiphania in Syria Secunda, and after the protracted study required to obtain a legal qualification he served Patriarch Gregory of Antioch as a legal adviser. He would appear to have obtained Gregory's confidence, since he accompanied him to Constantinople in 588 to assist in the defence on a charge of sexual misconduct (*HE* 6.7). As a successful lawyer he was a prosperous and prominent individual: when he remarried in 588 there were public celebrations in Antioch (6.8); he received honorary ranks from the emperors Tiberius and Maurice (6.24), on the latter occasion in return for a work which celebrated the birth of Maurice's first son, Theodosius, in 584; he was acquainted with Maurice's parents (5.21), as well as with his brother-in-law Philippicus, whose reputation he attempted to protect (6.3).

Evagrius, therefore, belonged to the imperial establishment, and it would not be surprising if he reflected official views on doctrinal matters. Accepted orthodoxy on Christology in the late sixth century is commonly termed neo-Chalcedonian, a stance which attempted to uphold the major decisions of the Council while stressing its agreement with Cyril of Alexandria and making a number of specific con-

cessions to reconcile Monophysite opponents, who had now established a separate episcopal hierarchy.[65] This represented a continuation of the ecclesiastical policies of Justinian, whose Theopaschite and Three Chapters initiatives, indeed even the heretical Aphthartodocetist edict in 564, all had this objective: to preserve communion with Rome and Western Christendom Chalcedon could not be abandoned, but specific aspects must be clarified, or corrected, to achieve unity in the east. Gregory of Antioch urged his congregation to abandon the destructive civil war which was destroying the Christian community, and to refrain from a precise 'weights and measures' approach to doctrinal discussions.[66]

Evagrius shared this conciliatory approach. His presentation of the background to the Nestorian dispute attributes the initiative to the Devil, who destroyed ecclesiastical harmony by securing disagreement about a single letter (1.1); he clarifies his opinions when reporting events after Chalcedon, where he argues that the opposing Christological formulae of Christ in (*en*) two natures and Christ from (*ek*) two natures are mutually inductive: by confessing the one, the believer naturally confesses the other (2.5). The gap was small, but Evagrius despondently concludes that mankind was too stubborn to accept this fact, scorning death rather than approve this reality. Evagrius displays remarkable tolerance of the process of doctrinal definition through the progressive identification of blasphemy and heresy, which helped construct a more rigorous orthodox vocabulary: even heretics strive after more appropriate definitions of "the ineffable and inscrutable benevolence of God", and remain in agreement about vital aspects of Christian belief (1.11). The process was disruptive, but strengthened the Church in the long run. The very first sentence of Evagrius' introduction encapsulates this approach: "Eusebius Pamphili—this was a man who was particularly erudite in various respects and especially in the ability to persuade his readers to practise our faith, even if he was not capable of making them absolutely correct". The founder of the historiographical tradition, within which Evagrius operated, was not himself perfect in matters of doctrine.[67]

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[65] See Pauline Allen, "Neo-Chalcedonianism and the Patriarchs of the Late Sixth Century", *Byzantion* 50, 1980, 5–17.

[66] Gregory, *On the Baptism of Christ* 9–10 (*PG* lxxxviii 1880–1).

[67] Cf. Socrates *HE* 1.8.34, 23.6–8; 2.21: Eusebius was a reluctant supporter of

One would expect Evagrius to provide a narrative with a Chalcedonian slant, but less vehemence than Theodore Lector and Liberatus displayed; by and large this is what he composed, although there are a few surprise preferences along the way. He chose to begin his narrative with Nestorius and the First Council of Ephesus, even though, as a continuator of Socrates, he could have started a decade later, *circa* 440, with Proclus as patriarch of Constantinople; this was a sensible decision, since it permitted him to tell the whole Nestorian story, from heresy to divinely afflicted punishment (cf. *HE* 1.2). Also, Socrates had stated that Nestorius was not guilty of the popular charges of heresy levelled against him (*HE* 7.32). For Evagrius, Nestorius was a Judaizing blasphemer who caused considerable disruption to the Church, while his leading opponent, Cyril of Alexandria, is presented sympathetically in spite of the conflicts between the sees of Alexandria and Antioch; Cyril champions orthodoxy and unity, while the rectitude of his actions is shown by the judgement of posterity and the successive punishments suffered by Nestorius (*HE* 1.3–7). Evagrius does, in keeping with his views on doctrinal progress, report Nestorius' justification for his Christology, that he was trying to avoid conflict, but states that he refused to abandon his blasphemy even after deposition and so was justifiably sentenced to exile. Evagrius quotes extensively from Nestorius' own writings to demonstrate, in proper legal fashion,[68] that he received considerable supplementary torments as the result of barbarian invasions; his death confirmed his wickedness, a reference to the tradition in Zachariah and John Rufus about his tongue being consumed by worms (1.7).

Evagrius' treatment of the Eutychian dispute is brief; he avoids the issue of Theodosius II's compromising views, and presents Chrysaphius and Dioscorus as the evil manipulators at Ephesus in 449 (1.10). Instead he turns to issues on which Christians could agree, first pagans whose criticism of Christian wrangling is rejected, next Theodosius II's piety as demonstrated in his anti-Nestorian edict which counteracted his previous support for Nestorius, and then Symeon Stylites (1.11–14). There follows a miscellany of secular

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the Nicene creed, since he objected to the term consubstantial, *homoousios*. For discussion, see T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 215–16, 226–7.

[68] The point is made by Allen, *Evagrius* 80.

notices,[69] after which the book concludes with a long discussion of different types of ascetics, an illustration perhaps of the many approaches to God which different people might adopt (1.21). Evagrius has had to steer a careful line: Theodosius and Cyril might both be criticized by a Chalcedonian writer (e.g. Liberatus), but by the late sixth century their standing in the east was secure and it would have been pointless to provoke dissent by investigating their tergivizations. Similarly the Second Council of Ephesus was a discreditable episode for the whole Church; it could not be ignored in a comprehensive narrative, but excessive exposure would only lead to problems and so Evagrius provided enough information to understand why Dioscorus had to be condemned at Chalcedon.

Book II is dominated by Chalcedon. Marcian's piety and good qualities as a ruler are emphasized by two portents and a character sketch. The celibacy of his marriage to Pulcheria is stressed, contrary to Monophysite slander, and another accusation, that he was appointed emperor without the consent of the senior Augustus, the western ruler Valentinian, is turned to his credit since Valentinian confirmed the eastern selection on account of Marcian's virtue (2.1). Evagrius notes that the venue of the Church Council summoned by Marcian was switched from Nicaea to Chalcedon, a point which anti-Chalcedonians exploited to impugn its holiness; Evagrius, without mentioning this accusation, provided an excursus on St Euphemia of Chalcedon (2.3), which was perhaps intended in part to elevate the status of this alternative location—Nicaea could not boast such a distinguished local saint. Evagrius also tackles, with specific reference to Zachariah, the charge that Nestorius was summoned from exile to attend the Council (2.2). The invitation could corroborate the view of the Council as a Nestorian affair, and so Evagrius rejects Zachariah on the grounds that the Council consistently condemned Nestorius and that he died before proceedings began, as shown by a quotation from a letter by Eustathius of Beirut. Neither objection is cogent,[70] but Evagrius felt that a repsonse was necessary.

Evagrius presents two separate accounts of the Council, a short version in the narrative (2.4) with enthusiastic readers being referred to the longer report in an appendix (2.18). In the narrative Evagrius

[69] Evagrius could have used Theodosius II's military successes (1.17, 19) to prove that he had God's favour, but the point is not made explicitly.

[70] Cf. Allen, "Zachariah" 474–5.

focuses on the deposition of Dioscorus, and then proceeds directly to the Creed, with no word of the discussions about its necessity and the arrangements for its formulation. The Council's other business is presented summarily, though the contentious decision on the status of Constantinople is noted. The appendix, which is about four times longer, also concentrates on Dioscorus, with some repetition of material. But here Evagrius includes extracts from the *acta* of Second Ephesus, which indicate the disorderly nature of proceedings, and describes the various attempts to persuade Dioscorus to attend the Council's judgement of his case: Dioscorus emerges as a violent and shifty rogue, whose intransigence ensures his condemnation; his standing in Egypt is undermined by mention of the complaints from Alexandrian clergy, including a relative of Cyril. The *acta* are then quoted to show how Cyril was in agreement with the Tome of Leo, which thus becomes the touchstone of orthodoxy: opponents of Chalcedon are presented as supporters of the heretical Eutyches, whereas bishops disciplined for their part in the proceedings at Ephesus in 449 were readmitted to the fold after subscribing to Leo's Tome. The formulation of the Chalcedonian Creed and the assorted topics of the latter stages of the Council are quickly summarized, though Theodoret's anathema of Nestorius is noted in the context of his reinstatement. In contrast to Monophysite accounts, which portray Theodoret as the evil genius behind deliberations, Evagrius scarcely mentions him. Evagrius' version of Chalcedon was designed to appeal to as wide a spectrum of opinion as possible.

For the next four decades, until the death of Zeno (491), Evagrius used the anti-Chalcedonian narrative of Zachariah as his main source for ecclesiastical affairs, arguing against its particular slant with the help of various documents. He reports disturbances in Alexandria and Palestine (2.5): although opponents of the Council are opportunist troublemakers, Evagrius admits that wrongs were committed by both sides so that the uproar is an example of the Devil's success in disrupting ecclesiastical communion. The reputation of Chalcedon is enhanced by citations from a letter of Symeon Stylites to Basil of Antioch, in which the great saint explicitly commends the holy fathers of Chalcedon and the pious intiative of Emperor Leo in consulting eastern bishops about its validity (2.9–10). The book contains the same blend of secular information as Book One, material which is incidental to the account of doctrinal deliberations and their consequences.

Evagrius introduces Zeno as a most unsuitable emperor, who was not surprisingly ousted by Basiliscus (3.1–3), but Basiliscus then succumbed to the influence of Timothy Aelurus to issue his anti-Chalcedonian Encyclical. The whole incident reveals how imperial instability confused the Church: the contradictory statements of the bishops in Asia provide a good example, and Evagrius shows some sympathy for their plight by refusing to judge which of their opinions was genuine (3.9; p. 109.6–7). Evagrius is favourably disposed towards Zeno's attempts at ecclesiastical union through the Henoticon; he notes, for example, Zeno's decision not to proceed against the aged Timothy Aelurus, and ascribes subsequent arguments between Constantinople and Rome firmly to the ambition of John Talaia and deceits of Peter Mongus (3.17–18). Although he relies on records of a Council at Rome in 484 which was held to condemn Acacius of Constantinople (3.19–23), Evagrius maintains his positive view of Acacius as a peacemaker, and of Zeno's ecclesiastical policy which resolutely resisted all demands to anathematize Chalcedon. By contrast, the sequence of revolts, which comprises the bulk of Evagrius account of secular affairs of the reign (3.24–7), links up with his harsh assessment of Zeno's character (3.1); the discrepancy between these views of Zeno, which can be traced back to Evagrius' respective sources, Zachariah for ecclesiastical business and Eustathius for secular events, is not reconciled so that the presentation of Zeno is fragmented.

Anastasius is introduced as a peaceful person who wished to make no innovations, especially with regard to the Church; tranquillity and the avoidance of strife were his prime objectives, even though this meant tolerating considerable diversity towards Chalcedon. Anastasius only intervened against innovators, which explained his deposition of Euphemius and then Macedonius of Constantinople (3.30). Such a favourable presentation of an emperor who attempted to push the whole of the East into an anti-Chalcedonian stance might seem odd, but a report passed down in Evagrius' family recorded the emperor's toleration towards their local bishop at Epiphania, and his refusal to sanction actions likely to result in bloodshed (3.34); on this basis Anastasius could be presented as another conciliator. A factor in the presentation of Anastasius is the evidence available to Evagrius: Zachariah's narrative ended in 491, and Evagrius did not know, or chose not to use, Theodore Lector's very hostile account.[71] Instead

[71] The obvious explanation is that Evagrius, writing in Antioch, was simply

he relied on a long letter of Alcison of Nicopolis, which blamed Philoxenus of Mabbug for the disturbances in the patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem (3.31); this was corroborated by oral testimony (3.32). When Evagrius records Anastasius' confrontation with Macedonius (3.32), and the rioting in Constantinople occasioned by innovations in the Trisaghion (3.44), the emperor's behaviour does not receive the harsh criticism which a supporter of Chalcedon might have levelled. Notices of secular affairs reinforce the impression of a successful ruler: victories over Isaurians and Arabs (3.35–6), energetic action to rectify damage caused by the Persians and to strengthen Constantinople's defences (3.37–8), and his personal determination to overcome bureaucratic opposition to the eradication of the Chrysargyron tax (3.39);[72] the pro-Chalcedonian dimension to the revolts of Vitalian is not mentioned, nor is Anastasius' repeated duplicity in negotiating with him (3.43). A long attack on Zosimus (3.40–1) includes a review of divine intervention in imperial affairs: enemies of the Church have died violently, orthodox emperors have been successful.

If Anastasius the Monophysite receives a good press, then Justinian the Chalcedonian comes in for criticism. The explanation is similar, local loyalties: Justinian's attempt to impose the Aphthartodocetist doctrine brought him into conflict with Anastasius of Antioch, whose banishment was only thwarted by the emperor's timely death (4.40–1). Evagrius' treatment of Justinian's ecclesiastical policies is patchy: the on-off persecution of Monophysites in his first decade is not mentioned, nor are the unsuccessful discussions about reunion in 532 or the Theopaschite Edict of 533 which introduced a significant concession to Monophysite opinion. Instead Evagrius notes the dissension within the palace between Justinian and Theodora, the machinations of Severus of Antioch on his visit to Constantinople and the consequent deposition of Anthimus (4.10–11). Evagrius concludes that there was thereafter no rupture in the churches, with all patriarchs being in communion, and all bishops following their patriarch (4.11):

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unaware of the existence of Theodore's account—though part of it had been available to Cassiodorus in the mid-sixth century, and it would be abridged in the early seventh century. Theodore's hostility to Anastasius was, however, so extreme that Evagrius might have regarded his account as unusable.

[72] Although Evagrius disapproved of other fiscal actions of Anastasius (3.40), the favourable view is presented much more strongly.

this is an extremely optimistic assessment of the state of the Church at a time when the Monophysites began to establish their separate hierarchy. The Fifth Ecumenical Synod, held at Constantinople in 553, is introduced in unpromising terms as the product of human scheming and rivalries, which God's goodness arranged to advantage (4.38). Evagrius provides a sketchy account of the complicated preliminaries,[73] and was unclear about the chronological development of the dispute; he records the key decisions on Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas, before turning to decisions relevant to Origen.[74] He does not mention Pope Vigilius' protracted opposition, but passes directly to the deposition of Eutychius "after some time had interposed" (4.38); the interval was over 11 years, and Eutychius was expelled in the dispute over Justinian's Aphthartodocetist decree, a connection which Evagrius does not make (4.39).

In Book Four the balance of Evagrius' narative begins to shift, with greater space allocated to secular affairs. Ecclesiastical business still dominates, but there is a very long section on military events, mostly drawn from Procopius but with religious and miraculous incidents highlighted (4.12–27). The intention was certainly not to narrate any of the campaigns, especially not the western reconquests, but to provide evidence of divine involvement in human affairs and of the progress of Christianity: the material is there in Procopius and contributes to his thoroughly Christian historical view,[75] but Evagrius has highlighted this aspect by paring away the main narrative of Vandal or Italian campaigning. The only detailed accounts concern three eastern cities threatened by the Persians: Apamea in 540, Edessa in 544, and Sergiopolis in 542 (4.26–8). The events had been narrated by Procopius (*Wars* 2.11; 26–7; 20), but in each case Evagrius had

[73] Thus he omits Justinian's anti-Origenist edict of 543, his initial Three Chapters edict of 544, the dealings with Pope Vigilius which resulted in his subscription to this edict in 548, and Justinian's Declaration of Faith in 551.

[74] An interesting contrast to Evagrius' treatment of Justinian's initiatives can be seen in the *Chronicon Paschale*, a text composed at Constantinople in the 620s: here the major Church Councils are treated briefly, with Chalcedon receiving very little attention, but the author then quotes Justinian's Theopaschite Edict and the Edict of 551 (pp. 636–84; ed. L. Dindorf [Bonn, 1832]). These attempts to adapt Chalcedonian doctrines would appear to have been important for a writer operating when a new attempt to reconcile Christological differences was being contemplated by Sergius, the Monoergist and Monothelete initiatives of the 630s, whereas the original Council did not deserve to be highlighted.

[75] For discussion, see Averil Cameron, *Procopius* (London, 1985) esp. ch. 7.

his own information which enhanced the miraculous aspect of proceedings. At Apamea he had been taken by his parents to experience the fire miracle associated with the display of the relic of the Holy Cross; at Edessa he introduces the story of the icon of Christ which served to ignite the Persian siege mound; at Sergiopolis he disregards the Procopian account to describe how the Persians were dissuaded from their siege by a vision of a massive garrison on the walls. Evagrius' intention is to demonstrate how God protects His people, and the result is an account of these eastern campaigns which is much more positive than the sequence of Persian successes in Procopius. With the exception of the great earthquake at Antioch in 525 (4.6) and the bubonic plague which Evagrius himself survived (4.29), Evagrius was not interested in the Empire's internal affairs. Imperial character, however, was important for him and he criticizes aspects of Justinian's behaviour (4.30, 32); nevertheless his reign was graced by various holy men and miracles (4.33–6). God had chosen not to punish His people for the sins of their ruler.

"Thus indeed Justinian, after filling absolutely everywhere with confusion and turmoil and collecting the wages for this at the conclusion of his life, departed to the lowest places of punishment." (5.1). Considering that Justinian had not caused more disruption to the Church than Anastasius, and that he had been responsible for establishing the dogmatic framework of neo-Chalcedonianism within which Evagrius operated, this is a harsh judgement, but it was one shared by strict Chalcedonians such as Liberatus and by Monophysites such as John of Ephesus, who blamed him for the persecutions they had to endure. Justin II is presented in terms similar to Zeno (5.1–2), and the misdeeds and misfortunes of his reign are noted (5.7–9). The fact that he fell out with Anastasius of Antioch on financial matters and expelled him (5.5) contributed to Evagrius' distaste—even though this was the occasion for the appointment of his employer, Gregory. Evagrius cites an imperial doctrinal edict, in effect a new Henoticon, which followed extensive negotiations between Chalcedonian and Monophysite bishops at Constantinople; these complicated preliminaries and the debates in the East over its reception are not mentioned, though it would be strange if Evagrius knew nothing of them.[76] The edict was accepted as orthodox in itself, but the insis-

[76] They are narrated by John of Ephesus (*HE* 1.19–25), who was one of the Monophysite bishops involved.

tence in its final sentence on maintaining the *status quo* ensured that opponents of Chalcedon would not be reconciled.[77] In doctrinal terms there was nothing wrong with this behaviour, but Justin is blackened, even more than Zeno, by involvement in murders at the start of his reign (5.1–3), and by the incompetent prosecution of the Persian War which resulted in the capture of the great fort of Dara and the pillaging of parts of Syria, including Apamea (5.7–10). Evagrius does not attempt to do justice to Justin's praiseworthy doctrinal initiatives, which deserved more attention in an ecclesiastical history, so that, even more than in Zeno's case, the presentation of the emperor is unbalanced.[78]

God's mercy on the Romans was displayed through the preservation of Tiberius as Justin's successor (5.11): he was attentive where Justin had been careless, generous where Justin was avaricious, so that Roman affairs prospered and the Persians suffered humiliation (5.12, 14–15). Evagrius also presents extracts from Justin's speech on the occasion of Tiberius' proclamation as Caesar in which he admitted his errors and the justice of God's vengeance (5.13). The crowning glory of Tiberius' reign was his appointment of Maurice as eastern commander, and then as successor (5.19–22), a choice which was justified by various miracles; Maurice's piety secured military success for the Romans. The only major ecclesiastical event to be narrated from the reign is the pagan scandal of the late 570s, into which Gregory of Antioch was dragged:[79] the affair was exploited by Monophysites to embarrass the Chalcedonian hierarchy and to point to the double standards of Church leaders who encouraged persecution of anti-Chalcedonians but were reluctant to prosecute or punish pagans. This angle is emphasized in John of Ephesus' treatment of

[77] Michael the Syrian (10.4, vol. II p. 299) omits this sentence; John of Ephesus (*HE* 1.19) states that it was added at the behest of Justin's anti-Monophysite advisers, who did not want the discussions to succeed.

[78] For discussion, see Averil Cameron, "The Early Religious Policies of Justin II", *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976) 51–67; reprinted in Ead., *Continuity and Change in the Sixth Century* (Variorum, Great Yarmouth, 1981) X; "Early Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*: Two Case Histories", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 3 (1977), 1–17; reprinted in Ead., *Continuity and Change* IX.

[79] See the discussions by I. Rochow, "Die Heidenprozesse unter Kaisern Tiberios II. Konstantinos und Maurikios", *Studien zum 7. Jahrhundert in Byzanz. Probleme der Herausbildung des Feudalismus* (*Berliner Byzantinische Arbeiten* 47, 1976), 120–30; F.R. Trombley, "Religious Transition in Sixth-Century Syria", *Byz. Forsch.* 20 (1994) 153–95, at 168–79.

these events (*HE* 3.27–31). For Evagrius, by contrast, Gregory was duped by the wily pagan Anatolius (5.18), but investigation exonerated him of the accusations of participation in sacrifices. There is no mention of the attempt at Christological reconciliation sponsored by the Ghassanid leader Al-Mundhir in 580, even though Gregory of Antioch was kept informed of developments.

Just as Marcian had bequeathed the Council of Chalcedon to the Empire as his legacy, so Tiberius left Maurice, a man who combined all the qualities appropriate to a ruler.[80] The account of Maurice's reign is dominated by secular affairs, mostly the eastern campaigns including events in which Gregory of Antioch played a prominent part (e.g., 6.11–13).[81] The Christian Empire enjoyed success in war, with the conclusion of the long-running conflict with Persia resulting in the Persian King Khusro II sending dedications to the shrine of Sergius at Resafa, in acknowledgement of the power of the saint (6.21); pagan Arabs approached for baptism, and in his sole reference to contemporary Monophysites Evagrius records that Gregory travelled around the frontier districts where the doctrines of Severus were particularly prevalent and brought many places into the Church of God (6.22). Like Tiberius, Maurice is portrayed as a good Christian ruler; his rule was presaged by miracles (5.21) and his conduct as emperor fully justified these promises (6.1). The presence of Symeon Stylites the Younger demonstrated that God was still showing his favour through his saints (6.23).

Evagrius' narrative represents a shift away from the polemics of writers engaged in Christological controversy to a more detached but still partisan approach. As he nears his own lifetime he devotes less attention to ecclesiastical matters, a tendency which is also evident in his fifth-century predecessors. This reticence has been seen as a reflection of the delicate doctrinal balance in the eastern provinces, with Evagrius reluctant to raise contentious issues,[82] but consideration of the narratives of Theodore or Liberatus suggests that those engaged in controversy are likely to state their case forcefully.[83]

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[80] For discussion of Evagrius' presentation, see Michael Whitby, "Evagrius on Emperors and Patriarchs" in Mary Whitby (ed.), *The Propaganda of Power* (Leiden, 1998), 321–44.

[81] Detailed discussion of these events in Whitby, *Maurice* part III.

[82] Allen, *Evagrius* ch. 2.

[83] Cf. also the hagiographies of Cyril of Scythopolis, whose firm commitment to

Evagrius, rather, seems to be writing from a position of superiority: his views represent orthodoxy, and they are dominant in the hinterland of Antioch—it is only in remote regions near the frontier that followers of Severus are numerous, and even these succumb when visited by the patriarch. Thus Evagrius can afford to be charitable in his attitude to doctrinal controversy: the process is disruptive, but it serves a positive purpose by defining correct doctrine more precisely. He is also careful in his presentation of crucial individuals and events in the controversy: Nestorius was a safe target, but Dioscorus' treatment at Chalcedon demanded extended treatment to demonstrate that his punishment was fair. Evagrius did not question the reputations of participants such as Cyril and Theodosius, though he did rebut some Monophysite accusations, such as those against Marcian and Pulcheria. Most emperors are treated favourably, although interference in the Antiochene Church by Justinian and Justin could not be forgiven; Zeno already had a poor reputation in the secular tradition, but Evagrius presents his ecclesiastical policies positively, and Anastasius, surprisingly, is highly commended.

Although writing ecclesiastical history, Evagrius presented himself as the heir to both secular and religious traditions (5.24), a stance which has caused some confusion in assessing his work and considering the related question of the end of the late antique tradition of ecclesiastical historiography. Thus Allen asserts that Evagrius and other contemporary historians felt constrained by the expectations of their chosen genre, a problem which potential successors found too difficult to overcome so that history ceased to be written,[84] but this hypothesis ignores the variety and adaptability of the different historiographical genres whose demise it is meant to explain.[85] Evagrius' willingness to reshape secular material has its precedent in Sozomen's use of Olympiodorus,[86] and he used Procopius for his own religious

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Chalcedon is a response to the controversies in Palestine in the fifth and sixth centuries.

[84] Allen, *Evagrius* 69–70, 268; the notion of the difficulty of historiography in late antiquity is still endorsed by Averil Cameron, "Remaking the Past", in G.W. Bowersock, Peter Brown & Oleg Grabar (edd.), *Late Antiquity, a Guide to the Postclassical World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), 1–20, at 11.

[85] See Michael Whitby, "Greek Historical Writing after Procopius: Variety and Vitality", in Averil Cameron and Lawrence Conrad (eds.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East 1, Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Princeton, 1992), 25–80.

[86] Liebeschuetz, "Historians" 162.

purposes. Liebeschuetz argued that ecclesiastical historiography had always been a tenuous tradition, with intermittent bursts of activity, and that it succumbed to the popularity of chronicles.[87] But this hypothesis underestimates the diversity of authors concerned with Church History, and misrepresents the status of chronicles; in any case there was a significant break in the chronicle tradition after the composition of the *Chronicon Paschale* in *circa* 630.[88]

An alternative observation of Liebeschuetz offers, to my mind, a more promising line of enquiry, namely that not all periods have experienced an equal need for history. Granted the repeated reluctance of ecclesiastical historians to provide a detailed narrative of contemporary doctrinal arguments, the silence of the tradition after Evagrius needs to be set in the context of the complicated disputes of the seventh century when the Monothelete debate caused considerable disruption: intellectuals were now devoting their talents to doctrinal polemic and did not have the longer perspective to produce a historical narrative. Contemporary imperial misfortunes were also relevant.[89] Whereas the traditions of secular history and chronicles were both reactivated in the context of Heraclius' triumph over the Persians in 628, ecclesiastical history did not share in the revival, perhaps because this brief spell of imperial success coincided with the start of new doctrinal controversy. Shortly thereafter the Arab invasions posed a massive problem for writers who presented the links between divine and human affairs: God had clearly abandoned the Romans, a development which was more likely to provoke anguished searching for orthodoxy than a continuation of the providential history of the Church triumphant. In the Eastern Empire there was a historiographical "Dark Age" after the early 630s, of which ecclesiastical historiography was no more than one element. When society's need for history began to reassert itself in the eighth century, the Chalcedonian controversy had long been overtaken by other issues, for example Iconoclasm, so that this dominant issue for Evagrius and his predecessors was no longer of such pressing concern. Writers like the chronicler Theophanes were more concerned with more contemporary issues than the details of an old dispute.

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[87] Liebeschuetz, "Historians".
[88] See Whitby, "Writing" esp. 59–74.
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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE BEGINNING OF BYZANTINE CHRONOGRAPHY: JOHN MALALAS

Elizabeth Jeffreys

The chronicle of John Malalas, written in the course of the sixth century, is the earliest extant example of a Byzantine world chronicle.[1] This is a genre which, combining secular and biblical history, presents a Christian account of world history from creation to the author's own day. Malalas' chronicle was influential; it was quoted and excerpted very soon after it reached its final form and material derived from it shaped the Byzantine perception of the past throughout the Byzantine millennium. However, though the chronicle was treated as a serious work by the author's contemporaries and immediate successors, scholars in the West from the Renaissance onwards have regarded it with contempt since it conspicuously fails to conform to classical norms of language, style and presentation. Only in recent years has there developed an awareness that this text might represent something more than ignorant and semi-literate babblings. Much, however, still remains uncertain about the purposes and nature of the work, which may be clarified now that a new edition of the Greek text has appeared.

The Chronicle: Contents and Purpose

Malalas' chronicle survives in many extracts and translations. In its main witness, the eleventh or twelfth-century Oxford manuscript *Baroccianus 182*,[2] the chronicle is presented in eighteen books, which

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[1] Frequent reference will be made in this chapter to papers which were produced in conjunction with the 1986 English translation (cf. Bibliography): E. Jeffreys, ed., with B. Croke and R. Scott, *Studies in John Malalas* (Sydney, 1990) (hereafter, *Studies*).

[2] Henceforth Ba; for a description, see E. Jeffreys, "Malalas in Greek", *Studies*, 245–8.

run from the creation of Adam to the reign of Justinian. Thus Book I deals with Adam, Noah and the Flood and its consequences, and the Egyptians; II–IV covers the early Greek states—Argos, Athens and Thebes—and the early history of Israel after Abraham; V treats the Trojan War at great length; VI deals with the Babylonian captivity, the kingdoms of Lydia and Persia and Roman history in the person of Aeneas; VII is concerned with the foundation of Rome, VIII with Alexander and the Hellenistic kingdoms, IX with Roman republican history, leading up to Augustus and the birth of Christ at the beginning of book X, where there is a chronological excursus; X ends with Nerva (A.D. 98); XI–XII deal with the period from Trajan to the Tetrarchy, focussing on Antioch (A.D. 98–305); XIII runs from Constantine, the first Christian emperor, to Theodosius I (A.D. 305–402); XIV deals with Theodosius II to Leo II (A.D. 402–474); XV to XVIII each deal with one emperor—Zeno (XV: A.D. 474–491), Anastasius (XVI: A.D. 491–518), Justin (XVII: A.D. 518–527) and Justinian (XVIII: A.D. 527–565).

In its present form Ba, in addition to other lacunas, has lost its final folios and so breaks off in 563. However it is clear that the chronicle in this manuscript would have continued to the end of the reign of Justinian, in 565. For this the main arguments are that the two folios missing from the last gathering[3] would have been sufficient to cover the remaining two years of the reign, to judge by the average space for each year taken at this point, and that the opening entry for XVIII gives the total number of years for Justinian (XVIII § 1; Th 354, Bo 425: 38 years, 7 months and 13 days),[4] indicating that the chronicle was completed after his death. Furthermore, other witnesses, such as John of Ephesos (d. ca. 580), knew that Malalas' chronicle extended to the end of Justinian's reign.[5]

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[3] See Jeffreys, *ibid.*, for a discussion on how the number of folios lost from Ba can be gauged accurately on the basis of gathering marks.

[4] References are to Books (in Roman numerals) and paragraphs (§) according to the 1986 translation (the paragraphing does not always correspond to that of the new edition), and to page numbers according to both Thurn's edition (Th) and the 1831 Bonn edition (Bo). All translated quotations are taken from the 1986 translation.

[5] The Laterculus Malalianus, a late seventh-century Latin text, much of whose material derives from Malalas, concludes with an emperor list clearly related to Malalas' entries on imperial reign lengths; the last entry lists Justin with a reign of 9 years (inaccurately). This suggests that Malalas may have extended his chronicle into Justin's reign. Though there is a little further evidence in favour of this proposal, it is ultimately unconvincing.

The chronicle's preamble, which also survives in a mutilated form only, and not in Ba, sets out the work's programme.[6] The author proposes to "abbreviate the Hebrew books written by Moses", that is, to deal with biblical history, and then to add narratives taken from chroniclers, poets and historians, that is, to deal with secular history, and finally to give "a summary account of events that took place in the time of the emperors, up till the events of my own lifetime which came to my hearing, . . . to the reign of Zeno and those who ruled afterwards" (the implications of this for the biography of Malalas will discussed below). In its eighteen-book format the chronicle can be perceived as falling into two halves, pivoting at Book X, each fulfilling a part of the preamble's objectives. Biblical and secular history are interwoven in the first nine books, culminating with the end of the Roman republic, the advent of Augustus and the birth of Christ. Christ's incarnation is prominent at the beginning of Book X, which like all subsequent books, is structured in terms of imperial reigns, Malalas' second focal point in the preamble. The position of the two passages on Christ's incarnation at the pivotal point between books IX and X suggests, not surprisingly, that this was a key event in Malalas' perception of world history and also that the whole work was structured to emphasise this. It is also possible to suggest other structural divisions within the chronicle: that it falls into triads of six book sections (I–VI, VII–XII, XIII–XVIII), emphasising in turn the East Roman Empire's heritage from the Old Testament, from Rome and then from the Christian empire.[7] All this argues that the chronicle was conceived from its inception in eighteen books (and thus that any extension after 565 did not form a nineteenth book); it also indicates that one guiding hand was responsible for its composition throughout.

It is, however, clear that the chronicle appeared in at least two

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[6] As well as losing its last two folios Ba has also lost its first gathering. The text printed as Book I in Dindorf's Bonn edition is taken from a manuscript of George Monachos. The true preamble, now published in Thurn's edition, is found in a fragmentary Greek manuscript (P: Paris, Supplementum Graecum 682, ff. 9–14 [published by V. Istrin, in *Zapiski Imp. Akademii Nauk*, ser. 8, vol. 1, no. 3 (St Petersburg, 1897), 1–29]); in a version of John of Antioch, on whom see below (B: Parisinus Graecus 1630, ff. 236–9); and also in the Slavonic translation (on which see below briefly, and S. Franklin, "Malalas in Slavonic", *Studies*, 276–87).

[7] R. Scott, "Malalas' View of the Classical Past", in G.W. Clarke et al., eds., *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Canberra, 1990), 147–64; B. Croke, "Malalas: The man and his work", *Studies*, 1–25, at 2.

editions. First, much of Book XVIII is very different from the rest of the chronicle: the chronicle's focus has become Constantinople rather than Antioch and the entries are brief and annalistic rather than discursive and topic-based. Second, later excerptors, such as Evagrius (532/7–593/4), the *Chronicon Paschale* (ca. 632) and the Slavonic translation (10th–11th centuries) used versions of the chronicle which ended much earlier than the surviving text—around 527–528, though there is no agreement over the exact finishing point of the chronicle which they knew.[8] John of Ephesos, however, writing slightly before Evagrius, and in Constantinople rather than Antioch, used Malalas' chronicle in a form which included the extended version of Book XVIII.[9] Perhaps the most likely original ending point of the first edition came with the Endless Peace with Persia in 532/3 (and thus at Book XVIII § 76, Th 401, Bo 478).[10]

The pivotal position of the passages on Christ's incarnation has a bearing on the reasons for the chronicle's composition. The chronological underpinning of the entire chronicle is a framework of dates calculated 'From Adam', that is, from creation. Twenty of these dates survive, some clear and unequivocal, others corrupt beyond possibility of reconstruction, others obscured in Ba but recoverable from other witnesses.[11] From these it becomes apparent that Malalas is working with an idiosyncratic series of calculations. For him Christ's incarnation took place in the year 5967 From Adam and his crucifixion in the year 6000, thus ushering in at that point the seventh millennium. Of the various calculations generally used by Byzantine chroniclers and chronographers, the most common placed the incarnation in 5500, which allowed the year 6000 (with whatever fateful consequences it might have in terms of Christ's Second Coming) to arrive

[8] Evagrius uses Malalas for events between 502 (when his previous source, Eustathius of Epiphaneia, ceased) and 526 where his copy of Malalas broke off (Evagr. *HE* 4,5; the *Chronicon Paschale* does not know of Malalas as a source after the Nika Riot in 532 (M. Whitby and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 A.D.*, Liverpool, 1989, xix); the Slavonic version breaks off in 528 (Franklin, "Malalas in Slavonic", *Studies*, 284).

[9] F. Nau, "Analyse de la seconde partie inédite de l'Histoire Ecclésiastique de Jean d'Asie", *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 2 (1897), 455–93, at 493; and W. Witakowski, "Malalas in Syriac", *Studies*, 299–310, at 305–6.

[10] See B. Croke, "Malalas: The man", *Studies*, 17–25 for a survey of the issues.

[11] These dates are discussed by E. Jeffreys in "Malalas' use of the past", in G.W. Clarke et al., eds., *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Canberra, 1990), 121–46 and in *eadem*, "Chronological structures in Malalas' chronicle", *Studies*, 111–66, at 111–20. See further below.

at some point in the late fifth century.[12] By the Alexandrian era, whose use was widespread, the year 6000 would have arrived in 491 A.D. There is enough evidence to indicate that this was a matter of concern to the Orthodox world, and in particular to the church in Syria.[13] Millennial preoccupations then were a major impulse for Malalas' composition. The thrust of the arguments and calculations he presents is that fears over the passing of the millennium are irrelevant, since this event was already long past.

John Malalas: Author

Virtually nothing is known of Malalas outside the chronicle that goes under his name, and even within the chronicle there is little that is clear. Later contemporaries knew of him under a variety of names: Evagrius referred to him as John the Rhetor, while John of Ephesos preferred John of Antioch. For John of Damascus in the eighth century, in the Constantinian excerpts in the tenth century and John Tzetzes' *Chiliades* in the twelfth he appears as John Malelas or Malalas as well as John of Antioch. Regrettably, more than one writer named John came from Antioch in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, a source of some confusion both at the time and in modern scholarship; to be distinguished are John Malalas, the chronicler; John Scholastikos, patriarch in Constantinople (565–577) and author amongst other things of an important collection of canon law;[14] John, patriarch of Antioch (631–649); and John of Antioch, a historian writing in the early seventh century who drew extensively on Malalas.[15]

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[12] V. Grumel, *La chronologie* (Paris, 1958), 24 for a general discussion of Byzantine calculations of years from creation; B. Croke, "Malalas: The man", *Studies*, 35–6 on Malalas' relation to mainstream views.

It should be pointed out that the figures in Ba for the chronological excurses in Books X and XVIII have been corrupted, and are in need of emendation; Von Stauffenberg made the necessary emendations in his edition in 1931, as has Thurn in 2000, but the English translation in 1986 did not, though the discussion in *Studies*, 1990, is predicated on the emendations; they will appear in future re-editions of the translation.

[13] S.A. Harvey, "Remembering the Pain: Syriac historiography and the separation of the churches", *Byzantion* 58, 295–308.

[14] Referred to by Evagrius as John ἐκ τοῦ Σηρημίου and carefully distinguished from the historian.

[15] John of Antioch's history deserves a new edition. In at least one manuscript (Paris, Gr. 1630, ff. 236–9, referred to as B in the 1986 translation of Malalas) the

The name John Malalas is found in the chronicle's preamble. The heading in the Greek reads "A report from John", and continues "descended from the time of Constantine the Great"; the Slavonic translation, however, reads "originally from the city of Antioch the Great" and follows with a phrase that can either mean "in lesser Syria" or can be emended to give the genitive of the name Malalas. In view of the other testimony to this form of the chronicler's name, it would seem reasonable to emend to "Malalas", though the fragile nature of the evidence should be noted.[16]

It was suggested above that one author was responsible for shaping and producing the whole chronicle. This, together with the comments in the preamble about events in his own lifetime "which came to my hearing", associated with the reign of Zeno, has implications about Malalas' date of birth and his life-span. Zeno reigned from 474 to 491; Justinian died in 565. It would be physically feasible, even if a little unlikely, for a not-quite centenarian writer, born in the first years of Zeno's reign, to pen the last words of his record in the years immediately following Justinian's death; other writers in the sixth century, notably Jordanes and Cassiodorus, were active to an advanced age. But the phrasing of the preamble offers other interpretations: "to my hearing" suggests the use of oral informants. These could be Malalas' immediate contemporaries, and there are certainly signs that he did make use of such informants (as is discussed below). It is perhaps more likely that they were older contemporaries, belonging to the generations of his parents or grandparents; this would give him access to a further twenty years and more of conscious memories from each generation to add to his own observations. Thus, to have access to oral informants with memories of Zeno's reign, Malalas need not have been born until 510, or even after. However, given that an edition of the chronicle was completed by the early 530s (as will be discussed shortly) and arguably shows signs of Malalas' professional interests, it is necessary to go back before 510. Perhaps one would not be too far wrong in placing Malalas' birth in the decade 490 to 500, thus making him a septuagenarian at Justinian's death.

The preamble with its evidence for John Malalas' name allows further deductions to be made about the author's background. The

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first two books of John of Antioch's work are apparently taken unchanged from Malalas.

[16] See the apparatus to this passage in the 1986 translation and in Thurn's edition.

name Malalas conceals the Syriac root 'mll', which has meanings and implications of 'eloquent' or 'learned'; it interprets the Greek term 'rhetor'.[17] Coming from Antioch, a Greek enclave in a Syriac-speaking region, this surely means that John Malalas came from a Syriac-speaking background and underwent a reasonably extensive education. This would have been an education in Greek, involving Greek literary culture—there were no alternatives. The knowledge of the Greek and Roman cultural heritage displayed in the chronicle should not be seen, then, as a haphazard collection of bric-a-brac but the result of a rhetorical training. If the results seem strange to us then this is as likely to be due to the loss of comparable material as it is to Malalas' own idiosyncracies.[18]

Further suggestions about Malalas' life and interests have to be gleaned from the chronicle itself. Here again it is relevant to remember the arguments that one author shaped the whole work so that, despite indications that many sources were used to construct the chronicle (as will be discussed below), it is justifiable to look for features that point towards Malalas' individual interests.

It is obvious, for example, that Malalas and his chronicle have an interest in Antioch. This interest is clear in all parts of the text: the foundation legends of the city are given in detail, imperial reigns in books X–XII are couched largely in terms of imperial visits to Antioch and the imperial building campaigns there,[19] there is much information

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[17] The possible Syriac forms are discussed by Witakowski, "Malalas in Syriac", *Studies*, 299–310, at 305–6, note 108.

[18] Parallels to the attitudes shown by Malalas can be found in writers deemed respectably learned, such as Procopius or John the Lydian (see R. Scott, "Malalas and his Contemporaries", *Studies*, 67–85) as well as in those usually put on the lunatic fringe, such as Cosmas Indicopleustes (P. Odorico, "L'uomo nuovo di Cosma Indicopleustes e di Giovanni Malalas", *Byzantinoslavica* 56, 1995, 305–15) or Discorus of Aphrodito (L. MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito: His work and his world*, Berkeley, 1988).

[19] Foundation legends: VIII §§ 11–15, Th 149–54, Bo 197–203 on the successive Seleucid foundations of Antigonia, Palaiopolis and ultimately Antioch the Great (on the inter-relationship of these narratives, see G. Marasco, "Giovanni Malala e la tradizione ellenistica", *Museum Helveticum* 54 (1997), 29–44.

Imperial visits and building: e.g. X § 50, Th 199, Bo 263: Domitian; XI § 9, Th 208, Bo 275–6: Trajan, XI § 14, Th 209–10, Bo 278: Hadrian; XI § 24, Th 212, Bo 280–1: Antoninus Pius; XII § 2, Th 215, Bo 283: Commodus; XII § 16, Th 220, Bo 290: Pertinax; XII § 22, Th 224, Bo 294–5: Severus.

The information that Malalas gives on Antiochene topography provides the starting point for the discussions of G. Downey in *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton, 1961). On the reliability of Malalas' information on imperial activities, see G. Downey, "Imperial Building Records in Malalas", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 38 (1938), 1–15.

on local Antiochene customs,[20] much of the Hellenic mythology that appears in the chronicle has an Antiochene connection;[21] and much circumstantial information is provided on on statues and other features of the Antiochene streetscape.[22]

For Malalas, the past is a seamless whole, closely related to his present, and anachronisms are rife: no state, for example, can function without a *basileus* conceived in imperial terms, so that Agamemnon is as likely to summon a *conventus* as Leo I.[23] Malalas is interested in the trappings of the Roman imperial state—in the dress of its officials and the symbolism behind ceremonial[24]—and in the functioning of that state. Thus he regularly notes the status of a city (whether it is a metropolis and whether it has city rights);[25] he records the foundation of provinces in a stereotyped set of phrases;[26] he notes, also in a formulaic way, imperial interventions after natural disasters;[27]

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[20] For example: II § 7, Th 21, Bo 28: the ritual of door knocking as a memorial rite for Io; VII § 12, Bo 186–7: the beating of a scape-goat in February; X § 52, Th 200, Bo 264: the anti-mosquito talismans at the horse-races of Graste; XI § 4, Th 205–6, Bo 271–3: drum beating in memory of the Persian defeat; XII §§ 3–4, 7–10, Th 216–20, Bo 284–9: the conduct of Antioch's Olympic Games.

[21] For example, I § 3, Th 5, P 7 and VIII § 16, Th 153, Bo 202: the giants of old were to be found at Pagrae outside Antioch; IV § 11, Th 54, Bo 76: Marysas is the name of a river near Antioch; II § 32–4, Th 32–4, Bo 45–9: the long account of Antiope's sufferings is justified by the presence statues of her sons Zethos and Amphion in Antioch; for other examples, see E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' World View", *Studies*, 58. M. Mango, "Artemis at Daphne", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 21 (1995), 263–82 discusses the correlation between the mythological depictions on silver ritual buckets and the mythological material selected by Malalas.

[22] For example: V § 67, Th 110–11, Bo 141: the statue of Orestes and its striking posture; VIII § 17, Th 153, Bo 202: statues of a horse's head and a helmet; VIII § 22, Th 155, Bo 205: the Charonion and its apotropaic properties. See also Downey, *Antioch*, *passim*, and A. Moffatt, "A Record of Public Buildings and Monuments", *Studies*, 87–109.

[23] V § 11, Th 74, Bo 102: Agamemnon; XIV § 40, Th 294, Bo 371: Leo I. For further examples, see E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' World View", *Studies*, 60–1.

[24] There are, for example, discussions on the use of purple dye for imperial costume (II § 9–10, Th 23–5, Bo 32–4), the displaying of imperial busts when magistrates are in session (VII § 2, Th 132–3, Bo 172) and hippodrome symbolism (VII § 4–5, Th 133–7, Bo 173–7); see also E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' World View", *Studies*, 55–66.

[25] A full list, which runs from the elevation of Herakleia under Vespasian (X § 46, Th 198, Bo 262) to that of Laodikeia under Justinian (XVIII § 39, Th 376, Bo 448), is given in E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' sources", *Studies*, 205, note 22 (17 cases in all).

[26] From the creation of Bithynia under Pompey (IX § 13, Th 168, Bo 222) to that of Theodorias under Justinian (XVIII § 39, Th 376, Bo 448): full list, E. Jeffreys, *ibid.*, and M. Jeffreys, "Language of Malalas: formulaic phraseology", *Studies*, 225–31, at 226–8.

[27] M. Jeffreys, *ibid.*, 228.

he has a strong interest in legislation.[28] This is the sort of information that would be held in, or pass through, the offices of the administrators of a Roman province, offices which would be staffed by persons of the approximate educational level implied by the name, or nickname, Malalas/rhetor. When it is noted that it is possible to extract from the chronicle a remarkably complete list of the holders of the office of the *comes Orientis*, the administrator of the diocese of Oriens whose base was in Antioch, it becomes an interesting thought that Malalas could well be one of the officials who worked within the *scrinia* of the *comes Orientis*.[29] The administrative structures of the diocese of Oriens were re-organised in 535.[30] This might well have provided an incentive for Malalas to leave Antioch and move to Constantinople, taking with him the first edition of his chronicle, which he eventually updated with material collected from publicly available resources. Another point at which he may have left Antioch, or been compelled to leave, could have come with the Persian sack of the city in 540.

It is tempting to use comments in the chronicle made in the first person to reconstruct Malalas' movements around the world of the east Mediterranean. Thus there are references to his finding in Thessaloniki a book by an otherwise unknown Brunichius which discussed the historical significance of the scapegoat ritual, to his discovery of a document "in the house of Bassus" authenticating the statue of the miraculously healed woman in Paneas in Palestine, and to a lecture on astrology in Constantinople, given also by an otherwise unknown figure, Fortunus.[31] There is a strong *prima facie* case that these passages came from Malalas' pen, and would thus place him—at unknowable points in his life—in Thessaloniki, Palestine and Constantinople. But the case is weakened by Malalas' habit of taking phrases over unchanged from his sources.[32] There is a comparable

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[28] R. Scott, "Malalas and Justinian's Codification", in E.M. and M.J. Jeffreys and A. Moffatt, eds., *Byzantine Papers* (Canberra, 1981), 12–31; E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' sources", *Studies*, 201–2.

[29] As discussed by B. Croke, "Malalas: The man", *Studies*, 11.

[30] Justinian, *Novel* 8.5; on the structures of the *scrinia* and the numbers of officials employed, see A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602* (Oxford, 1964), 509, 512 and 592, and on the reorganization, *ibid.*, 281.

[31] Brunichius: VII § 12, Th 143, Bo 187; Bassus: X § 12, Th 181, Bo 239; Fortunus: I § 1, Th 4, P 6. Note that the statue at Paneas had become something of a cliché in patristic literature, starting from Eusebius, *HE* 7, 18.

[32] One clear case is the word "my" which survives in an ambassador's report

situation in connection the phrases about objects which exist 'to the present day', when the 'present day' is that of the source and not Malalas: thus comments on monuments and rituals in Tyre, Tripolis or Scythopolis almost certainly do not tell us that Malalas himself witnessed them.[33] Malalas certainly did journey from Antioch to Constantinople and may have travelled further, but the details cannot be pressed.

Despite such uncertainties certain aspects of Malalas' personality can be discerned through the chronicle. Not surprisingly for an author of a chronicle with a Christianising view of the world and with a millennial interest in the Second Coming, there are several strands of religious interests.[34] One has to do with a mystic gnosticism, and appears in the use of terms like 'mystic', 'mystic-wonder worker' or 'philosopher' in connection with disparate figures such as Io, Cleopatra, and Jesus and beginning with references to Seth and his pillars of knowledge set up after the Flood. There are similar references to theurgic displays (which, for example, enabled Picus Zeus to seduce many women).[35] Similar thought patterns lie behind Malalas' use of the pagan oracles foretelling the Trinity.[36] Parallel to this is Malalas' interest in Persian fireworship and Zorastrianism, information on which may derive from an identified Persian informant, Timotheos 'the Persian carrier'.[37] Malalas also seeks to integrate into his world

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from Axoum, which has nothing to do with Malalas' experiences: XVIII § 56, Th 385, Bo 458; another is the bizarre phrase ζυγίην Νέμεσιν at I § 8, Th 10, P 13 which can only explained by reference to the source at this point; see E. Jeffreys, "The Chronicle of Malalas. Book I: A commentary", in P. Allen and E. Jeffreys, eds., *Sixth Century: End or beginning?* (Brisbane, 1996), 52–74, at 68. Such cases can be multiplied many times.

[33] II § 8, Th 23, Bo 31: Tyre; V § 65, Th 108, Bo 139: Scythopolis; XIV § 29, Th 209, Bo 367: Tripolis.

[34] On Malalas' religious views generally, see B. Croke, "Malalas: The man", *Studies*, 11–17; E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' World View", *Studies*, 64–6.

[35] I § 1, Th 4, P 6 and I § 5, Th 8–9, P 10: Seth; II § 7, Th 21, Bo 28: Io; IX § 10, Th 165, Bo 219: Cleopatra; X § 30, Th 189, Bo 250: Jesus; I § 13, Th 13, P 16: Picus Zeus. See Jeffreys, "Malalas' World View", *Studies*, 63–5 for a fuller list and discussion.

[36] These derive ultimately from the oracular utterances of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. and were put together in the late 5th century as a written collection in the text now known as the Tübingen Theosophy; the version used by Malalas seems in fact to date from the early years of the 6th century. See also H. Erbse, *Fragmente griechischen Theosophien* (Hamburg, 1941; new edition, 1997); S. Brock, "A Syriac Collection of Prophecies of the Pagan Philosophies", *Orientalia Louvaniensia Periodica* 14 (1983), 203–46; R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London, 1986), 186.

[37] II § 20, Th 27–8, Bo 38: fire-worship; I § 11, Th 12, P 15 and § 7, Th 9,

picture the Olympian deities, remnants of the worship rituals of the pagan Hellenic world embedded in the texts which conveyed Greek literary culture. This he did by rationalising these figures as ordinary mortals in euhemerizing narratives: thus Dionysios becomes a lively aristocratic youth and Zeus a ruler who founds a dynasty and is harmonized into a Judaeo-Christian framework by becoming a member of the tribe of Shem.[38] But it is striking that most of Malalas' interest is in informal elements of sixth-century religious belief and practice. He has virtually nothing to say about the public religious controversies of his day, the Monophysite quarrels, for example; and he barely notes the controversies of the past, listing church councils but with no detail of their proceedings and decisions.[39] What he does note, however, are some martyrdoms and cults of saints.[40]

One is left also with an impression of dogged, conscientious determination to worry out a solution to a problem, particularly where sources present conflicting opinions. This can be seen in Malalas' chronological calculations, even though the detail with which they are worked out is minimal in comparison, for example, to the calculations of Synkellos. Thus in the excursuses in Books X (§ 2, Th 173–4, Bo 277) and XVIII (§ 8, Th 357–8, Bo 429) Malalas attempts to argue against the standard figures in favour of his own, and warns against indiscriminate totalling of reign lengths since emperors tended to reign simultaneously. Similarly he records variant versions of the death of Julian.[41]

Interestingly Malalas, unlike most of his contemporaries, shows no sign of having produced his chronicle with a patron in mind. Perhaps

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P 12: Zoroastrianism; XVIII § 30, Th 372, Bo 444: Timotheos informs Malalas about Persian Manichees.

[38] On Dionysios, see S. Reinert, "The Image of Dionysios in Malalas' Chronicle", in S. Vryonis, ed., *Byzantine Studies in Honor of Milton Anastos* (Malibu, 1985), 1–41. Generally, see S. Reinert, *Greek Myth in Johannes Malalas' Account of Ancient History*, Ph.D. thesis, University of California (Los Angeles, 1981); E. Hörling, *Mythos und Pistis: zur Deuting heidnischer Mythen in der christlichen Weltchronik des Johannes Malalas* (Lund, 1980).

[39] XIII § 11, Th 248, Bo 323: Nicaea; XIII § 40, Th 267, Bo 346: Constantinople; XIV § 25, Th 287, Bo 365: Ephesos; XIV § 30, Th 289, Bo 367: Chalcedon.

[40] For example, X § 9, Th 208, Bo 276: Ignatios; X § 10, Th 209, Bo 277: Drosine; XII § 35, Th 234, Bo 303: Babylas; XII § 36, Th 235, Bo 304: Kosmas and Damian; XII § 50, Th 241–2, Bo 314–5: Gelasinos; XIII § 19, Th 251, Bo 327: Domitios; XIV § 37, Th 291–2, Bo 369: Symeon the Stylite.

[41] Cited are: Eutychianus (XIII § 23, Th 256, Bo 332), Eutropius (XIII § 25, Th 257, Bo 334) and an unattributed version which involved Basil of Caesarea and a dream of Saint Mercurius (XIII § 25, Th 257, Bo 333–4).

the only candidate who could be proposed is the Hermogenes who, as ambassador to Persia, plays so large a role in the work in the years preceding the putative ending of its first edition.[42]

Transmission of the Chronicle

The history of the transmission of Malalas' chronicle is an intriguing saga.[43] This is an example of an important text that has survived independently by the narrowest of margins, in one manuscript only. Furthermore, there is considerable evidence from later witnesses in several languages that the text in that manuscript has been significantly abbreviated in many places. The manuscript (Ba, referred to earlier) has itself been overwritten at various points, usually to clarify a faded reading but occasionally to alter some linguistic forms.[44] Its missing folios, and some of the ways in which their contents can be partially reconstructed, have also been referred to earlier.

There survives an early though very fragmentary copy of the chronicle, the uncial palimpsest known as the Tusculan Fragments, usually dated to the late seventh century. This demonstrates conclusively that the Antiochene 'first edition' and the Constantinoplitan section of the chronicle circulated together, and also shows that the text in Ba has at times been substantially abbreviated.[45] Most of the other witnesses in Greek to Malalas' text come, however, in the form of excerpts.[46] These can be independent extracts, as is the case with the entries from Malalas contained in the *De insidiis* and *De virtutibus*,

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[42] Hermogenes, *magister officiorum* 529–33 (*PLRE* III *Hermogenes* 1). Agathias, Procopius, John the Lydian, Menander Protector, Paul the Silentiary all had identifiable patrons who encouraged and supported their literary efforts: R. Scott, "Malalas and his Contemporaries", *Studies*, 81–2.

[43] The stages are set out in some detail in the chapter entitled "The Transmission of Malalas' Chronicle", *Studies*, 245–311.

[44] As is pointed out by J.B. Bury, "Johannes Malalas: The text of the codex Baroccianus", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 6 (1897), 219–30.

[45] Facsimiles most recently in G. Cavallo and H. Maehler, *Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period* (London, 1987), plate 49a; full reproduction in A. Mai, "De fragmentis historicis Tusculanis", *Spicilegium Romanum*, vol. 2 (Rome, 1839), Appendix, 1–28, after p. 28.

Details on editions and the portions of Malalas' text taken over by each of the works cited in the rest of this paragraph can be found in E. Jeffreys, "Malalas in Greek", *Studies*, 245–68.

[46] See also the lists in G. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1958, 2nd ed.), 330–1.

two of the surviving books from the massive historical encyclopaedia commissioned by Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. More frequently the excerpts are embedded, usually without acknowledgement, in other chroniclers. This process began early, as has been mentioned, with Evagrios, John of Antioch and the *Chronicon Paschale*, and continued with Theophanes (ca. 760–818), George Monachos (ca. 866), two anonymous world chronicles from the ninth century (Paris, Gr. 1336, ff. 143–61 and Paris, Gr. 854, ff. 71–99), the tenth-century Pseudo-Symeon and Kedrenos (ca. 1060). In the twelfth-century the hero portraits in Book V were plundered by Isaak Porphyrogennetos for his treatise on *What Homer left out*, and John Tzetzes for his prose and hexameter works which also aimed at filling in gaps in the Homeric narratives. It is this very success—in terms of the extensive use made of the text—which perhaps accounts for the fragility of the chronicle's independent survival, for once excerpted the chronicle had served its purpose and did not need independent recopying. The preamble had concluded with a request for Malalas' successors to continue the work, which could as well be achieved by incorporating extracts into their own works as by adding further entries to his.

Malalas' text was also influential outside the Greek-speaking sphere. Returning to its geographical roots, it was used by John of Ephesos (as has already been mentioned) and then taken up by a succession of Syriac chroniclers including Pseudo-Dionysus of Tell-Mahré (completed in 775) and Michael the Syrian (ending in 1195).[47] In the late seventh century John of Nikiu used it extensively in his Coptic chronicle, which now survives only in an Ethiopic translation of the Arabic version.[48] Also in the late seventh century, Theodore of Tarsus, sent from Rome in 669 to be archbishop of Canterbury, had extracted the passages of millennial debate to use in his own discussion, in Latin, on the date of the Second Coming and included as an appendix a list of imperial reigns based on Malalas' entries; this text is now known as the Laterculus Malalianus.[49] On a larger scale, some time in the eleventh century a translation of significant portions of

[47] For details see W. Witakowski, "Malalas in Syriac", *Studies*, 299–310.

[48] H. Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean, évêque de Nikiu* (Paris, 1883) (text and French translation); English translation: R.H. Charles, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu* (Oxford, 1916).

[49] J. Stevenson, "Malalas in Latin", *Studies*, 287–99; and *eadem*, *The 'Laterculus Malalianus' and the School of Theodore of Tarsus* (Cambridge, 1995), with an edition of the text, translation and full discussion.

Malalas' chronicle was made into Old Church Slavonic: sections of this have become embedded in several later chronicles and provide a useful witness to the original form of the text.[50] All this material in Syriac, Ethiopic, Latin and Old Church Slavonic needs to be consulted in the reconstruction of the full original version of Malalas' Greek text, for any portion of these later witnesses may preserve a phrase or sentence that can be attributed to the original.

In part because of the multiplicity of witnesses and the variety of languages involved, the history of modern editions of Malalas is a melancholy one, with long periods of preparation brought to an end by the premature deaths of prospective editors. The new edition in the Corpus Fontium Byzantinae Historiae was delayed by the untimely deaths of two editors in succession,[51] but has now been brought to fruition. However the history of the *editio princeps* also involved long delays.[52] Originally planned in 1633 to be the first Greek text to printed at the Clarendon Press in Oxford, it finally appeared, edited by Chilmead with introductory notes by Hody, in 1691. It was this that formed the basis for Ludwig Dindorf's 1831 edition in the Bonn Corpus with a number of often felicitous emendations—made, however, without recourse to the Oxford manuscript. Significant progress in understanding the identity of the author was made in the 1890s,[53] and von Stauffenberg's edition of books IX–XII in 1931 marked a major step forward, though only a partial one.[54] The English translation published in 1986 was the first attempt to bring together all the evidence for the full text of the original Malalas, using English rather than the multiple original languages.[55] It was also the first translation of the whole chronicle into a modern language.[56]

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[50] S. Franklin, "Malalas in Slavonic", *Studies*, 276–87; Franklin's collations of the Greek and the Slavonic text are incorporated in the apparatus to the 1986 English translation. The Slavonic chronicle passages that draw on Malalas were identified and edited by V. Istrin in a series of papers published in Odessa between 1897 and 1914; there is now a new revised edition by M.I. Cernyseva (Moscow, 1994).

[51] Editions were planned by K. Weierholt (1902–73) and H. Thurn (died 1992).

[52] B. Croke, "The Development of a Critical Text", *Studies*, 314–24.

[53] A debate conducted at times with acrimony in the pages of the newly founded *Byzantinishe Zeitschrift* until halted by Krumbacher ("Anmerkung der Redaktion", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 10 [1901], 53); see B. Croke, "Modern Study of Malalas", *Studies*, 324–38.

[54] A. Schenk von Stauffenberg, *Die römische Kaisergeschichte bei Malalas* (Stuttgart, 1931).

[55] A revised version is planned to appear shortly, now that the edition in the Corpus Fontium has been published.

[56] Chilmead's Latin translation appears in the Bonn edition and in *PG* XCVII, cols. 65–717.

Language of the Chronicle

A striking feature of Malalas' chronicle is the register of Greek in which it is expressed: this is the first substantial work in medieval Greek which uses a form of the vernacular in preference to the literary language.[57] Questions arise. The language used by Malalas certainly differs in many respects from that of his near, and classicizing, contemporary Procopius. But it has to be asked how many of Malalas's usages might also be found in Procopius and how many may be isolated as indeed vernacular, for this is a matter of surface rather than the real essence of their respective language usages. Procopius uses some obvious classical markers, while Malalas does not avoid some characteristically vernacular language, when the evidence of the non-literary papyri is taken into account for the spoken language of the period.[58] Many more linguistic studies are needed; in the meantime it is simpler to list some of Malalas' vernacular elements.[59]

In the morphology of verbs, for example, the aorist is developing forms in -α rather than -ον; there is a confusion between aorist and perfect and a reduction in the use of the future for which the present tense or a periphrastic form is subsituted; there is a decrease in participial usage and a move towards indeclinable modern forms. In syntax there is a blurring between ἵνα and ὅπως, and εἰ and ἐάν. Prepositions show a preference for the accusative, though there are frequent confusions over case. Vocabulary includes many examples of non-classical and presumably vernacular usages, some of which are attested for the first time in the chronicle; there are also a marked number of loan words, the majority of which are from Latin and have technical military or administrative applications.

A conspicuous element in Malalas' style is the number of repetitious elements it includes. There are redundant phrases, chief amongst these being ὁ αὐτός ('the same'), and λεγομένος ('so called'), and to a lesser extent ὁμοίως and ὡσαύτως. There are also formulaic expressions of time: 'in this reign', 'at that time', 'in that year'. Further

[57] P. Helms, "Syntaktische Untersuchungen zu Ioannes Malalas und Georgios Sphrantzes", *Helikon* 11–12 (1971–2), 309–88, at 313.

[58] F.T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, vol. 1: *Phonology* (Milan, 1977); vol. 2: *Morphology* (Milan, 1981). See also G. Horrocks, *Greek: A history of the language and its speakers* (London, 1998).

[59] For a succinct discussion of Malalas' linguistic usages, with further bibliography, see A. James, "Language of Malalas. 1: A general survey", *Studies*, 217–25.

formulaic expressions appear in reports of, for example, imperial benefactions after a natural disaster or on the creation of a province.[60] Another category involves brief and stylised verbal portraits, chiefly of the Greek and Trojan heroes (in Book V) and emperors (from Tiberius [X § 7, Th 177, Bo 232] onwards. While Malalas made a major contribution to this genre, which continued in the chronicle tradition subsequently, its origins can be traced back to Egyptian legal documents and rhetorical physiognomic literature.[61]

Of Malalas' excerptors, some—like Theophanes—were inclined to raise the linguistic register slightly, or at least to omit redundant words and phrases; others, like the *Chronicon Paschale*, took over the morphology and syntax unchanged. Evagrius, who referred to Malalas by name, made no comment about his style or language. Such extensive borrowing within a century of the chronicle's composition would suggest that the linguistic register was not necessarily offensive, even if at times it broke Byzantine taboos concerning the writing of the vernacular. Does this have implications for the audience for whom Malalas was writing his chronicle? Was there a readership for works written at a less than classicizing level of the language?

This is not an easy question to answer, given the dearth of direct evidence of parallel cases (only Cosmas Indicopleustes comes readily to mind); circular reasoning is all too likely. However, if Malalas were indeed an official in the bureau of the *comes Orientis*, fitted to this role by his educational attainments and his literary interests, then perhaps it is at this level of Byzantine society that his readers should be supposed—among literate but not learned bureaucrats, with a sense of their city's past and an interest in maintaining its functions. Some six hundred such bureaucrats were employed in the Antiochene *scrinia*.[62] It was for a comparable group that John Lydus wrote his antiquarian treatises in Constantinople (at a higher linguistic register, though sharing several common themes with Malalas).[63] The chronicle was plainly read by those who used it. Whether this implies a wide reading public is another issue, raising unanswerable questions about levels of literacy and the circulation of books in the sixth century.

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[60] M. Jeffreys, "Language of Malalas. 2: Formulaic phraseology", *Studies*, 225–31.
[61] E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, "Language of Malalas. 3. Portraits", *Studies*, 231–44.
[62] B. Croke, "Malalas: The man", *Studies*, 11.
[63] R. Scott, "Malalas and his Contemporaries", *Studies*, 67–85, at 72–5.

Chronological Systems

The Byzantine world chronicle provided a temporal framework into which was set mankind's history, both sacred (mankind's creation and salvation) and secular (the sequence of kingdoms and empires). Malalas had several patterns with which to express this, but he was not interested either in detailed tabulation, of the sort found with sparse annotations in Eusebius' charts, or in precise calculations, of the sort produced by Synkellos in connection with the date of Easter. Nor was he concerned to provide a year-by-year listing in the manner of his successors in the chronicle tradition, the *Chronicon Paschale* or Theophanes. Rather his technique in the earlier books was to provide broad synchronisms between sacred and secular history[64] and elaborate these with narratives,[65] as though fleshing out a skeletal annalistic list. A similar technique can be seen in the later 'historical' books, from Book X and the inauguration of the Roman Empire from Augustus onwards. After this the chronicle is structured by imperial reign, with some attempt at chronological sequencing within the reign but frequently with blocks of narrative that cover several years;[66] later excerptors, such as the *Chronicon Paschale*, at times clearly found it difficult to place chronologically events recorded by Malalas.[67]

Nevertheless there is a strong chronological framework to his chronicle, as has already been discussed. This was provided by the sequence of dates From Adam, which argue that the world had already reached the seventh millennium. Malalas' arguments on this point appear in Book X § 2 (Th 172–3, Bo 228) (in connection with the incarnation, where the logic behind their inclusion is clear) and in Book XVIII § 8 (Th 357–8, Bo 428) in connection with the year 527/8. Here there is no obvious reason for the discussion and one can only surmise that there was a contemporary relevance which is no longer

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[64] Perhaps most clearly expressed in the information given about Kronos and Picus Zeus (I § 8, Th 9–10, P 12; I § 12, Th 12, P15; III § 6, Th 42, Bo 59; III § 11, Th 44, Bo 62) where they and their descendents are correlated with Shem, Abraham and Moses; but similar thoughts are behind all the king lists: see E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' Chronological Structures", *Studies*, 124–38 (ruler lists).

[65] Thus in Book II Inachos and Io (§ 7, Th 20–2, Bo 28–30), Tauros and Europe (§ 8, Th 22–3, Bo 30–32), Phoinix (§ 9, Th 23–5, Bo 32), Perseus and Danae (§ 13–14, Th 25–7, Bo 34–7) etc. all pad out the sequence of rulers.

[66] For example, XI § 3–6, Th 204–7, Bo 269–74: Trajan's Parthian Wars; XV § 9, Th 306–11, Bo 383–6: on Zeno's relations with Theodoric.

[67] M. and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, xxii.

understood. There are the remnants of a similar major chronological digression in 491, at the death of Zeno and the passing of the year 6000 by the Alexandrian era.[68] The details of the debate to which Malalas was contributing are now largely lost, though there is interesting corroboration from fragments of Heyschius, a near contemporary who also wrote a (lost) *Patria* of Constantinople, that show that Malalas was not unsupported in his millennial views.[69] These views provide the pivotal points of Malalas' conception of world history: creation is the beginning of time, Phalek is at the mid-point of time (the year 3000; II § 12, Th 25, Bo 34 and X § 2, Th 173, Bo 227), the crucifixion (and man's salvation) in the year 6000 (X § 2, Th 173, Bo 228). In between are noted other staging points; of these some are obviously significant (VIII § 2, Th 147, Bo 193: the birth of Alexander the Great; XV § 16, Th 318, Bo 391: the passing of the year 6000 by the Alexandrian era), while the significance of others is less apparent. Textual problems in Ba add to the obscurity.[70] Given Malalas' reliance on his sources, his inefficiency at times in culling his material (discussed below) as well as corruption in transmission, it is not surprising that the importance of this structure to the chronicle was long overlooked.

Into this basic framework with its Christian world view was inserted secular history, and onto it was layered a number of more conventional chronological trappings, even if Malalas had frequently taken these over from his sources and had not necessarily integrated them well.

Thus for the early Greek states (and legendary history), there are king lists—for Argos, Sikyon, Tyre, Boiotia, Attica, Lakonia, Hellas, Lakedaimonia, Corinth, Phrygia and so forth, now much truncated and distorted. These are ultimately derived from the lists compiled by, for example, Kastor of Rhodes (1st century A.D.), which made their way into the chronographies of Sextus Julius Africanus and Eusebius; the forms found in Malalas have much in common with the lists in

[68] At XV § 16, Th 318, Bo 391, though not all the witnesses are included in the apparatus to the translation at that point; see Jeffreys, "Chronological Structures", *Studies*, 117–18 for a discussion of all the evidence.

[69] The text of Hesychius' sermon on the nativity which gives this date is available in Hody's preface to the Malalas Bonn edition at pp. li–liii.

[70] E.g. insolubly at VI § 17, Th 125, Bo 162: 'to this time'; though solutions are available at X § 2, Th 173, Bo 228; XV § 16, Th 318, Bo 391; and XVIII § 8, Th 357, Bo 428, thanks to other witnesses.

the late fifth-century *Excerpta Barbari*.[71] As indicated above, these lists and their synchronisms provided a basis on which could be hung euhemerizing narratives derived from the Greek literary tradition.

In the area of the chronicle structured by imperial reigns, events are sometimes dated by consuls; the forms of the names suggest that Malalas was possibly using consular lists related to the *Fasti Vindobonenses*.[72] Especially in the latter part of Book XVIII dating by indiction becomes quite frequent. Very occasional use is also made of dating by other eras, such as that of Diocletian, the Seleucid era (in use in Antioch; it is perhaps surprising that more use was not made of this), or the Roman calendar. All these arguably were taken from Malalas' sources.

Other chronological elements were probably due to Malalas' own interventions. These include a list of earthquakes, some of which were numbered; this is the type of information which would have been kept in Antioch's city archive, to which Malalas could have had access, if he was employed in the provincial administration; note that the numbered earthquake sequence is fullest for Antioch. Lists of dignitaries can also be reconstructed, notably a sequence of the *comites Orientis*, who were based in Antioch, and of the patriarchs of Antioch.[73]

It is striking that Malalas does not use the four-year Olympiad cycle. This dating element was fundamental to Eusebius' chronology and was also used by Malalas' main chronicle successor, the *Chronicon Paschale*, despite the fact that by the seventh century it had lost all real meaning.[74]

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[71] The fundamental work on the king lists remains that of H. Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie* (Leipzig, 1885). The *Excerpta Barbari* survive only in an eighth-century Latin translation: C. Frick, ed., *Chronica minora* (Leipzig, 1893).

[72] A consular list drawn up in the late fifth or early sixth centuries; Th. Mommsen, ed., *Chronica Minora I*, *MGH*, Auctores Antiquissimi 9 (Berlin, 1892), 274–336; see also R. Bagnall et al., *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire* (Atlanta, 1987), 48–50.

[73] For details on all these, see E. Jeffreys, "Chronological Structures", *Studies*, 143–64.

[74] It is an interesting but inconclusive thought that the emphasis placed by Malalas on the Antiochene Olympic Games could have been related to his non-use of a feature that must have been prominent in his chronological sources.

Sources

There are two reasons why it is worth considering Malalas' sources in some detail.[75] First, unusually for a Byzantine writer, he names many authorities as the sources for his statements, thus raising questions about the nature of the literary culture from which he came and the library provisions to which he had access; second, since he is the sole witness for much information, especially about Antioch, it would be helpful to be able to assess the basis for his statements.

In his preamble, Malalas indicates that there is a division in his chronicle. The change comes with the events of his lifetime, and is associated with the reign of the emperor Zeno, irrespective of whether this means that Malalas was born or reached maturity under Zeno. There is indeed a perceptible change after Book XIV, which closes with the death of Leo I and the comment that here ended the chronicle of Nestorianos. From this point on, the chronicle, beginning with the reign of Zeno in Book XV, is structured with each book devoted to a single imperial reign and with virtually none of the source citations that had been frequent previously.

It is justifiable then to see the chronicle falling, from the point of view of its sources, into three sections: Books I to XIV, XV to XVIII § 76 (Th 401, Bo 477) and XVIII § 77 to the end.[76]

To deal first with the issue of the citations. At first sight the range of these is impressive: temporally, the authorities extend over Greek literature from Homer to Malalas' contemporaries, covering poets and historians, as well as philosophers and theologians, to say nothing of the scriptures, and with a sprinkling of Latin citations as well.[77] Further investigation produces another picture and shows that most of this material is gathered at second hand and that Malalas will not have known directly more than a tiny proportion of the texts and authors that he cites. Thus clusters of citations appear to be taken as a group from other texts: Deinarchos, Philochoros and Kephalion, for example, are cited at II § 28, Th 32, Bo 45 on Dionysos' arms at Delphi; this passage is found also in Eusebius and

[75] Even if *Quellenkritik* is now falling out of fashion: see J. Ljubarskij, "*Quellenforschung* and/or literary criticism: narrative structure in Byzantine historical writings", *Symbolae Osloenses* 73 (1998), 5–24, with varied responses at 25–73.

[76] As has been discussed above, XVIII § 76, Th 401, Bo 477 marks perhaps the most likely finishing point for the first edition of the chronicle.

[77] See the table in E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' Sources", *Studies*, 167–216, at 170.

Synkellos and probably derives ultimately from Africanus. Citations are not infrequently given with a string of authorities. It is tempting to assume that the last cited author is the actual source for Malalas' reference, though sometimes the statement is so garbled and vague that even this is doubtful: at VI § 10, Th 122, Bo 157, for example, Theophilos is the last authority cited, after Thallos, Kastor, Polybios and Herodotos, for a statement on Croesus of Lydia; but it is far from clear what the name Theophilos meant to Malalas.[78] The garbled nature of a statement is sometimes in itself grounds for suspecting that Malalas could never have encountered it in its ungarbled state—in other words, there must have been an intermediary. This is particularly so in the case of the Latin authors referred to: Malalas is most unlikely to have consulted Ovid (I § 3, Th 5, P7) or Servius (I § 3, Th 6, P8; VI § 19, Th 126, Bo 162; VII § 9, Th 139, Bo 181) in their original language. It must be admitted, however, that the passage from Vergil (*Aen.* 4, 302–3) quoted in Greek at XII § 3, Th 216, Bo 285 is recognizable, and may with caution be used to evaluate vowel shifts in contemporary speech.[79]

Despite such reservations, in some cases it is possible to compare Malalas' quotations with an extant text and conclude that he did know it at first-hand. Perhaps the best instance of this comes in the lines quoted from Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Tauris*.[80] His quotations from the Orphic hymns are accepted as genuine fragments.[81] In the case of his references to Diktys of Crete and his Diaries on the Trojan War, which otherwise survive only in a Latin version, papyrus finds have largely vindicated the status of the Greek version which makes up most of Book V.[82]

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[78] Theophilos is cited as a key figure in Malalas' chronological debates; amongst the extant works of Theophilos, Bishop of Antioch, died ca. 180, are his three treatises *Ad Autolycum* which attempt to reconcile pagan and Christian chronologies—but none of the statements attributed to a Theophilos by Malalas can be corroborated in these texts; see R.M. Grant, *Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autolycum* (Oxford, 1970).

[79] B. Baldwin, "Dio Cassius and John Malalas: Two ancient readings of Virgil", *Emerita* 55 (1987), 85–6.

[80] In connection with the Orestes legends, at V § 63, Th 105–6, Bo 137: *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 69–70, 72–3, 103–5, 238, 241, 246, 248–51, 254–5, 495, 510, 771, 774, 790–1.

[81] What is now known as the Rhapsodic Theogony is quoted at IV § 8–10, Th 51–4, Bo 72–6, with prose paraphrases (= frags. 62, 65, 233); see M.L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983), 227ff.

[82] W. Eisenhut, "Zum neueren Diktys-Papyrus", *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F. 112 (1969), 114–19 and *idem*, ed., *Dictys Cretensis: Bellum Troianum* (Leipzig, 1973); see also E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' Sources", *Studies*, 176–7, 192–3 for further bibliography.

On several occasions Malalas indicates that he has himself hunted out a particular source; doubt has already been cast on the trustworthiness of these statements. Elsewhere he contrasts versions of events given by different authorities, and indicates his preference. When dealing with Hellenic mythology, this can be a general rejection of an account from a poet, or one told poetically, in preference to one by a sober prose writer; or it can be a statement that authorities differ (on Valerian's Persian campaign, for example, or the death of Attila).[83] While it can always be argued that such comparisons may be derived from Malalas' source, one example must surely be his own work: this is the comparison of this type which is the basis for the chronological excurses, and for the contrast between the millennial dates put forward by Eusebius and Timotheos, which is arguably one of the main purposes of the chronicle.

Despite his apparent openness about his sources, Malalas clearly used many authorities and types of material which he does not acknowledge. Some may be checked against written texts that survive independently, like the extensive quotations from the Septuagint.[84] He also quotes oracles from the collection now known as the Tübingen Theosophy. In other cases documents are cited: their nature is plain from their contents and contexts, although they have not survived independently; examples include Verina's rescript of 486 (XV § 13, Th 314, Bo 389) and Koades' letter to Justinian (XVIII § 44, Th 378, Bo 449–50). In yet other cases, we must surmise that a document or record was consulted, because of the nature of the information provided. This is the case with notices of legislation, or with matters which could have come from the *acta* or archives of Antioch or from the office of the *comes Orientis* (such as reports on disasters and disaster relief, or reports on rebellions).[85] Other sets of information can also be identified—on the creation of provinces or the *tychai* of cities—which are not attributed to a source but which are likely to have been available as written lists. Malalas' citations of inscriptions

[83] E.g. at II § 42, Th 38, Bo 53 Euripides is contrasted with Palaiphatos; at IV § 11, Th 54, Bo 77 'the poets' are rejected in favour of Ninos and Lucian; XII § 26, Th 229, Bo 297: Domninos on Valerian is preferred to Philostratos; XIV § 10, Th 279, Bo 359: Priskos' account of Attila is contrasted with a general 'others say'; for other examples, see E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' Sources", *Studies*, 214–15.

[84] V § 70–72, Th 113–16, Bo 144–9: Sennacherib's raid on Jerusalem, taken almost word for word from *Isaiah* 36 and 37.

[85] Details in E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' Sources", *Studies*, 200–9.

possibly also come into this category: it has long since been shown that Malalas had not sighted and recorded these himself but had taken them from an intermediary.[86]

Other blocks of material by their nature suggest the use of oral informants. Thus, for example, the details reported in connection with the Trisagion riots in Constantinople in 512 and Vitalian's rebellion in 513 are most likely to have come from Marinus the Syrian, prominent in both episodes and probably linked to Malalas by profession as well as ethnic background. Other likely informants are Hermogenes, *magister officiorum* in 529–533 and one of the negotiators with Persia prior to the Endless Peace, and Timothy 'the Persian carrier'.[87]

So far this discussion has focussed on features from the chronicle as a whole that can be isolated and attributed to sources of different types. This was the approach taken in the most recent study on Malalas and his sources.[88] The two previous major discussions of Malalas' sources, by Bourrier (dealing with Books I–XIV) and von Stauffenberg (focussing on Books IX–XII) were more concerned to isolate major portions of the text that could be attributed as blocks to Malalas' predecessors, thus reducing Malalas' own role in the composition of the chronicle and denying that the selection of material was an expression of his own interests.[89]

Bourrier concluded that Malalas was drawing on four sources in the first fourteen books. Of these Domninos was mentioned in the preamble, Timotheos was included there by implication (as one of the "chroniclers who agree among themselves", the others being Theophilos and Clement—who are named in the preamble), while Nestorianos is cited in the body of the chronicle. Bourrier's Fourth Source is an unnamed and unidentifiable entity, postulated to account

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[86] G. Downey, "Imperial Building Records in Malalas", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 38 (1938), 299–311.

[87] Marinus: XVI § 16, Th 329–32, Bo 403–5, and § 19, Th 333–4, Bo 407–8; Hermogenes: many details on the wars with Persia in XVIII § 34 (Th 373, Bo 445), § 36 (Th 375, Bo 447–8), § 44 (Th 377, Bo 449–50), § 50 (Th 380–1, Bo 452–3), § 53–4 (Th 383, Bo 456), § 58 (Th 386, Bo 460), § 60–1 (Th 387–90, Bo 461–7), § 65–6 (Th 391–2, Bo 468–70), § 68–9 (Th 293–4, Bo 471–2), § 76 (Th 401, Bo 477–8); Timothy: XVIII § 30, Th 372, Bo 444.

[88] In *Studies*, 167–216, with contributions from B. Croke.

[89] P.H. Bourier, *Über die Quellen der ersten vierzehn Bücher des Johannes Malalas* (Augsburg, 1899); A. Schenk von Stauffenberg, *Die römische Kaisergeschicte bei Malalas* (Stuttgart, 1931).

for whatever cannot be attributed to the other three. In general terms, Domninos was responsible for Antiochene material, Timotheos for parallel history between the biblical and secular spheres and for the oracular elements, Nestorianos for material dealing with Christ's life and the limited ecclesiastical history in the chronicle, while the Fourth Source is inevitably a rag-bag. Von Stauffenberg argued for three major sources: a *Kaisergeschichte*, a Christian world chronicle and an Antiochene *patria*. The two views are not incompatible: Domninos could be equated with von Stauffenberg's *patria*, and Timotheos with the Christian world chronicle. Many of Bourrier's points about the divisions in the text of the chronicle are valid: thus there are clear doublets of information at VIII § 28, Th 158, Bo 209, where entries on Perseus/Perses of Macedon and Lucius Paulus have been pasted together inefficiently; and the phrase 'above-mentioned' also marks disjunctions between blocks of material from different sources (this is clearest at VI § 16, Th 125, Bo 161 where material is resumed from the *Excerpta Barbari*, last used at I § 15, Th 11, P19).

On the whole then, it is justifiable to conclude that blocks of material which betray common interests may well have been taken over as a whole from earlier writers: thus legendary history on Antioch may well have been filtered through Domninos. However, since none of these putative sources survive, the extent to which they have been adapted or distorted can only be conjectured. But for all his dependence on his sources, it is justifiable to argue that Malalas also had agendas of his own, made his own contributions to the material he took over and moulded it as he wished. The interweaving of the large blocks itself exemplifies the process of selection and manipulation, as do the 'back references' which occur intermittently throughout the text and show a measure of control over the contents;[90] the last occur in XVIII at § 14, Th 361, Bo 431, referring back to VI § 16, Th 125, Bo 161 and Herakles in Spain, and at XVIII § 76, Th 401, Bo 477, referring back to XVI § 6, Th 326, Bo 398 and the beginning of the war with Persia under Anastasios. Other elements in the chronicle transcend the source divisions postulated by Bourrier by appearing in a variety of contexts. These are likely to be due to Malalas himself; good examples are the From Adam dates and the lists of Antiochene earthquakes.[91]

[90] For a full list see B. Croke, "Malalas: The man", *Studies*, 20–1; and also E. Jeffreys, "Malalas' Sources", *Studies*, 215–16.

[91] E. Jeffreys, "Chronological Structures", *Studies*, 164–6.

For the section running from Books XV to XVIII § 76 (Th 401, Bo 477) Malalas would have drawn on historians such as Eustathius of Epiphaneia, whom he acknowledges, and possibly also Priskos of Panium, as well as oral informants like Marinus the Syrian and Hermogenes, while for the last Constantinopolitan section he would have used what public notices came to his attention.

Predecessors

Malalas' essential predecessors in the genre in which he was working are not necessarily identical with the sources listed above. They also come from both sides of the divide which used to be prominent in modern handbooks, between chroniclers and historians.[92] The blurring can be seen in the list of writers in the chronicle's preamble where the chronicler Africanus, the ultimate source for most of Malalas' chronological listings, and Diodoros and Domninos, narrative historians even if very different from each other, are listed together. One way of looking at Malalas's work is as a survey of world history with a strong chronological argument.

By the sixth century chronography and world surveys had a long heritage.[93] After the expansion of the Greek-speaking world and the proliferation of states and kingdoms, the Hellenistic period saw a need for the construction of lists of rulers and the establishment of synchronisms between them.[94] An important figure in this early stage was the Egyptian priest Manetho (3rd cent. B.C.), named by Malalas but known to him only indirectly. Subsequent important figures in the constructions of synchronistic lists were Eratosthenes (c. 275–194 B.C.) and Apollodorus (born c. 180 B.C.), while later still further king lists were drawn up by Kastor of Rhodes (1st cent. B.C.) and Phlegon of Tralles (2nd cent. A.D.), both also named by Malalas. These lists gave the bare bones of history. Universal narrative his-

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[92] Even H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche Literatur der Byzantiner*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1977–8), has a separate section on the nature of chronicles, even if subsequently chroniclers and historians are treated together.

[93] For a fuller discussion, see B. Croke, "The Early Development of Byzantine Chronicles", *Studies*, 27–38 and *idem*, "The Origins of the Christian World Chronicle", in B. Croke and A. Emmett, eds., *History and Historians in Late Antiquity* (Sydney, 1983), 116–31.

[94] W. Adler, *Time Immemorial: Archaic history and its sources in Christian chronography from Julius Africanus to George Syncellus* (Washington, D.C., 1989).

tories were also composed, for example by Diodorus Siculus (died c. 21 B.C.; named by Malalas) or Dionysos of Halilkarnassos (fl. 7 B.C.).

With the spread of Christianity in the Roman world, a further need for synchronization arose, that of secular events with biblical history, leading to a polemic that crystallised in arguments over the relative dates of Moses and Plato. Important figures in these chronological debates were Justin Martyr (c. 100–165 A.D.), Tatian (fl. 160 A.D.), Theophilos (fl. c. 169 A.D.) and his three treatises addressed to Autolycus, and Clement of Alexandria (born c. 150 A.D.) and his *Stromateis*; the last two are cited by Malalas in his chronological passages though the statements cannot be matched to their extant works and he almost certainly did not know their writings directly. Highly significant advances were made by Sextus Julius Africanus (ca. 220 A.D.), whose work underlies many of Malalas' ruler lists.

The major figure in the development of a Christian chronography was Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260–340 A.D.); in his two-part Chronicle he presented lists that could form the raw material for a world history, and then expressed this history in Olympiads from Abraham to his day in tabular arrangement, in parallel files of kingdoms. As chronological debate continued, in the fifth century two Egyptian monks, Panadoros and Annianos, discussed the date of the incarnation. Their work, however, and that of their contemporaries has all but vanished, small portions only being preserved, for example, in the early ninth-century *Chronographia* of George Synkellos. The disappearance of so many of these texts has the effect of making Malalas' work appear more unusual than it was. If we had access to them, we should be less surprised, either by the fact that he attempted a synoptic Christianising world history or that he constructed it in narrative format rather than the tables popularised by Eusebius and his Latin continuator, Jerome.

Other lost late fifth- and early sixth-century chronicles and histories might have been similar in format and ideas to that of Malalas. These include the Greek *Excerpta Barbari*, surviving now only in a Latin translation but compiled in the last years of the fifth century; this combines consular lists (with some affinities to Malalas' consular information) and a narrative, parts of which reappear in Malalas, in particular the passages on Picus Zeus. There was also the *Chronike historike* of Eustathios of Epiphaneia, in two parts, running to 502 and cut short by author's death; it is cited by Malalas (XVI § 9,

Th 326, Bo 399) but as little else survives it is impossible to conclude how much of Malalas' information, for example, on Zeno and Anastasius might derive from him. Perhaps the most significant of all Malalas' contemporaries is Hesychius Illustris, born under Anastasius (and so a younger contemporary of Malalas), from whose pen there survives a passage, as has been discussed earlier, arguing for the same unusual crucifixion date (AM 6000) supported by Malalas. Hesychius also seems to have written extensively on historical issues, but questions of mutual indebtedness are impossible to resolve.[95]

Malalas was thus writing within a tradition that had a long history, and one which was significant since "a correct understanding of chronology made sense of history",[96] and of mankind's place within it. Although Malalas is the first extant Byzantine world chronicler, there were many antecedents and several contemporary parallels: it is an accident of textual history which makes his text appear surprising and unique.

Successors

World chronicles continued to be written in the Greek-speaking East Mediterranean long after the sixth century and Malalas. In these can frequently be seen reflected the picture of the ancient world found in Malalas: there may have been little interest in his eccentric world era and dating of the incarnation and crucifixion, or in most of his material on Antioch, but the emphasis on kings and empires remained. Thus republican Rome, virtually ignored by Malalas, remained a minor element in Byzantine historiography until Zonaras in the twelfth century. Many of Malalas' narratives were also reused: for example, euhemerizing passages on Picus Zeus and the legends surrounding Io reappear in George Monachos[97] and accounts of the Trojan War are prominent in Constantine Manasses' verse chronicle in the twelfth century.

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[95] See Phot. *Bibl.*, cod. 69; also *PLRE* II *Hesychius 'Illustris'* 14; also note 69 above, and A. Moffatt, "A Record of Public Buildings and Monuments", *Studies*, 96–8.

[96] B. Croke, "Early Byzantine Chronicle", *Studies*, 37.

[97] II § 4–9 are reflected in George Monachos (C. de Boor, ed., *Chronicon*, Leipzig, 1904; 2nd ed. P. Wirth, Stuttgart, 1978), 15.12–17.23. Lists of passages from Malalas reflected in later witnesses are noted *passim* in E. Jeffreys, "Malalas in Greek", *Studies*, 245–68.

The *Chronicon Paschale*, composed in the early 630s by someone in the entourage of the Patriarch Sergius, is the next surviving example of a world chronicle, also written with a particular agenda, in this case concerning calculations on the date of Easter.[98] The author knew of Malalas' work, although only in its first edition since he makes no use of material from the latter part of Book XVIII; he makes extensive use of Malalas' entries on mythological history but clearly found the lack of chronological precision a difficulty.[99] The *Chronicon Paschale* was constructed annalistically, with an entry for each year, whether or not there was information to be entered up; the author worked by Olympiads and years from creation and, subsequently, by years from the incarnation.

Several historical surveys that survive in fragmentary form drew on elements of Malalas in the intervening centuries, but the next major chronicle in the tradition is that of Synkellos-Theophanes. George Synkellos (died after 810) drew up a collection of extracts from a wide range of writers to illustrate world history from creation to his own day; his chronological agenda was to argue for the correlation between the week of creation and the days of Christ's passion.[100] His scholarly attitudes seem to have found Malalas' approaches unsatisfactory for he makes relatively little use of his text. This was not the case with Theophanes, the friend to whom Synkellos bequeathed his notes and a request to complete his chronicle, which had reached Diocletian. Theophanes drew extensively on Malalas,[101] though his own work was structured very differently, by Anno Mundi (Years from Creation), and with each year marked in addition by dates from the incarnation, regnal years of the Roman and Persian emperors, and bishops of Rome, Constantinople and Antioch.

Subsequently the world chronicle—despite the exception of George Monachos—ceased to be an important outlet for Byzantine historical expression. A more biographical approach came to the fore, exemplified in works produced under the aegis of Constantine

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[98] On the later Byzantine chronicle tradition, see R. Scott, "The Byzantine Chronicle after Malalas", *Studies*, 38–54.

[99] M. Whitby and M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, xviii–xix.

[100] Discussed also in W. Adler, *Time Immemorial* (as in note 94 above).

[101] As can be seen from the annotations to de Boor's edition (*Chronographia*, Leipzig, 1880) and to the English translation by C. Mango and R. Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor* (Oxford, 1997).

Porphyrogennetos, such as those of Theophanes Continuatus or Genesios. This process reached its height with the *Chronographia* of Michael Psellos and the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene.

Nevertheless the genre of world chronicle did not disappear entirely. It was in this tradition that in the mid-twelfth century Constantine Manasses wrote his verse *Synopsis Historike*, and in the thirteenth century that Joel and Ephraim each produced a *Chronographia*, though neither work was much more than a list of rulers. Also in the thirteenth century Theodore Skoutariotes, metropolitan of Kyzikos, composed his world history with recourse to good sources; these included a complete copy of Malalas. Entries in Skoutariotes' work enable some of the lacunas in the Oxford manuscript of Malalas to be partially filled. The Byzantine world chronicle tradition continued even after the Fall of Constantinople, with the sixteenth-century compilation attributed to Dorotheos of Monemvasia. Published under the title *Biblion Historikon*, this continued to be reprinted until the early years of the nineteenth century, extending the influence of Malalas' world view through the Turkish period of Greek history and into the historiography of the independent Greek state.[102]

Conclusion

If Malalas is considered in his sixth-century context with appropriate regard for elements of that context which have been lost to us, he is a fascinating example of the Byzantine *mentalité* of that time. Recent work has suggested an environment for him in Byzantine provincial administration which allows his work to be used more fully as a gauge of Byzantine attitudes, despite his eccentricities. All too often, however, he has been viewed as degenerate from a classicising perspective and he has been castigated by modern historians for failing to meet the standards of nineteenth- or twentieth-century historical research. It is indeed a mistake to use the chronicle as a historical source for any period before the late fifth century. The importance of the early books is as an invaluable witness to the way in which the past was viewed by a reasonably well-read Byzantine, perhaps a more significant point of view than that of the highly-educated

[102] R. Scott, "The Byzantine Chronicle after Malalas", *Studies*, 52–4.

writers whose views are normally given greater prominence. On the events for which he used oral sources, his information and views are of great significance. They naturally need sensitive examination and judicious interpretation, but probably in less measure than the partisan discourse of Procopius.

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